

School and Community in the Tropics

T. R. BATTEN

Communities and Their Development (published in 1957) was an introductory study of the whole field of modern community development and extension work in the tropics. In this book, *School and Community in the Tropics*, the author studies the possibilities of enlisting the help of the teachers and the schools. He has divided the book into three parts. In Part One, he considers the present role of the school, and the attitude of people and teachers towards it. In Part Two, he describes and assesses the results of many recent attempts to relate the work of the schools more closely to local community needs, and to extend its influence to adults as well as children. In Part Three, he examines the major difficulties encountered in countries which have attempted to apply these ideas on a large scale to the village primary schools. Experience shows that such policies may affect many other parts of the educational system. They imply the development of close co-operation between the education department and departments already working with adults. They also imply changes in secondary and even higher education; and an overhaul of existing methods of supervising and training rural teachers. In his final chapter the author sums up his conclusions.

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SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY
IN THE TROPICS



SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY IN THE TROPICS

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PREFACE

THIS book is mainly intended for teachers, administrators and extension workers in the tropics. In it I have tried to give a clear and factual picture of recent attempts in many tropical countries to bring the work of the schools more closely into line with local community needs, and with current community development policies.

In the first part of the book I discuss the need for community education and some of the difficulties likely to arise because of people's attitudes to the school. In the second, I describe and discuss representative examples of the work that has so far been done, quoting freely from the sources I have used. In the third, I examine the major difficulties that have so far been encountered and attempts to overcome them. My personal viewpoints and conclusions I have mainly reserved for the last chapter. The references are listed chapter by chapter at the end of the book.

I had hoped to be able to include illustrations representative of the topics discussed in Chapters VI and VII, but they were unobtainable, mainly, I think, because so few schools have made serious attempts to exert a *direct* influence on adult community life.

I am very grateful indeed to my wife, who is also my colleague at the Institute of Education. She has helped very greatly in the preliminary research and contributed much useful criticism while the book was being written. I would also like to thank all those educational administrators and teachers from many tropical

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countries with whom I have discussed some of the
projects and ideas examined in this book.

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January 1959

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PART ONE

NEEDS AND RESPONSES



INTRODUCTION

TODAY there is a great demand for school education in nearly every tropical country, mainly because people realize that the formal education of the school can equip their children to obtain a salaried job. But in fact only a few of the children who go to school can hope to get jobs of this kind. Most of them have to be content with work on the land or with poorly paid manual work in the towns.

Many people have felt that the education usually provided by the school is not well suited to the needs of these children, and many attempts have been made to make school education more useful to the majority of children by relating it more closely and practically to local community life. Schools which try to provide this kind of education are commonly called 'community schools'.

Since the war the idea of the community school has been linked in some countries with that of community development. Most governments in the tropics now want to educate the many adults who have never been to school. They want to teach them how to improve their homes, safeguard their health, and produce better crops from their farms. They also want to stimulate them to provide themselves with roads, improved water-supplies, or whatever other local improvements and amenities may be chosen as a community project.

A large-scale community development programme of this kind requires a very great number of workers who are often hard to recruit and always expensive to

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maintain. In some countries this is seen as a major problem, and the community school as one approach to solving it. Every town and nearly every village has at least one school. Could not the scope of the community school be extended further so that the school would help to educate, not only the children, but the grown-up people also? It is an attractive idea and it has been taken up seriously by some governments in the tropics, but so far with only limited success. The reasons for this will be discussed in the three chapters which follow.

I

THE NEED FOR COMMUNITY EDUCATION .*

SINCE the end of the Second World War the people of most tropical countries have either succeeded in establishing their independence or are now in the process of doing so. They value independence because it gives them freedom to mould their way of life to their own liking—to retain and develop what they feel is good, and to modify those aspects of it with which they feel dissatisfied.

Wherever Europeans were formerly in control, they introduced changes of many kinds. They developed trade by building roads, railways, and harbours, and by getting people to adopt new crops, new kinds of tools, and new methods of farming. They taught new ways of safeguarding the health of the people and their animals. They introduced new forms of government and new kinds of taxes. Very often they tried to convert people to their own form of religion, and always they introduced their own kind of education, and with it their own kind of educational institution—the school.

They introduced the school for two main reasons. They needed suitably educated local people to work for them as clerks and storekeepers and in many other posts in the government administration and in commerce and industry. This was the main purpose served by the school. It taught the same subjects as the schools in the West, and, of course, it taught the language of the country's rulers.

A second function of the school was to teach the Christian religion, and it was especially valued for this purpose wherever there were pagans—believers in tribal gods. Indeed, most of the schools first started in the tropics were mission schools, controlled by Christian organizations, and serving the purposes both of the missions and of the government.

Originally, as we have seen, these purposes were *Western* purposes, but in time they usually became the people's purposes as well. The people who became Christians valued the mission schools for the religious teaching they provided, and people of all religions soon came to value the school as the gateway through which their children must pass in order to get salaried employment in the world outside the village. And it is for these same reasons that they value the school today.

But although the people have now made the original Western purposes of the school their own, it must be noted that this does not imply that the teaching of the school is therefore in any way closely related to the people's ordinary way of life. Indeed, the prime function of the school in the tropics has nearly always been to prepare young people for life *outside* their own local community, and that is why it is valued now. It is not generally valued as a channel of community education simply because the great majority of the schools are not designed for this purpose and do not achieve it.

The fact that the school educates children for life outside the community does not mean that no education is provided for life within it. It means only that the school does not provide it. In fact, every small community has always had its own ways of educating young people for community life. Traditionally, there was a

great deal of informal teaching carried on by the family, or by the kinsfolk of the extended family, and in many communities such teaching was supplemented by the elders or by the priests of the local religious cult. In addition, especially in some tribal societies, there were arrangements for periods of more formal education. Thus in some tribes boys, and less frequently girls, left the parents' household to live for a time with their age-mates in special dwellings in or near the village, or in bachelors' halls with unmarried men, widowers, and strangers, where they were educated by contact with those older than themselves. Other tribes approached the idea of the 'school' even more closely in the teaching which preceded initiation into adult status in the tribe. Such teaching often had a clearly defined content, and the 'curriculum' might include religion, ethics, physical training, and training in vocational skills.¹

On the whole, people now value such kinds of locally provided community education much less than they used to do. One reason for this, as we have seen, is that so many people now fix their hopes for one or more of their children on the outside world, and on the school as the only means of preparing them for it. As more children go to school and stay at school longer, the school makes ever increasing demands on the time and energy of the community's children, and they have correspondingly less time and energy to devote to education for life in the community and less interest in it.

There is also a second reason. The old kind of community education was firmly based on tradition and custom. It was intended to prepare the young people of the community for a known and well-established way of life, and its whole purpose was to maintain tradition

and custom, not to change it. But people are, in fact, accepting changes of many kinds. This is mainly because they now need *money*, both to pay their taxes and to buy the new things they have learnt to want. They can get money by growing crops or making goods for sale outside the community, or by going outside the community to work for wages. Whatever they do, it always involves some break with established custom and confronts them with new problems—problems which the traditional kind of community education in no way helps them to solve. As people accept more and more changes, they find their traditional community education becoming less and less useful to them, and they no longer attach the same importance to it.

However, the fact that the traditional forms of community education are no longer appropriate to the changed conditions of today does not mean that the need for a modern and efficient form of community education does not exist. On the contrary, the need for it is already great and grows quickly greater. Nowadays, governments are trying to speed up the pace of development, and that means that the people living in the tropics are everywhere having to try to adjust themselves to rapid change, and in doing so to deal with problems they do not clearly understand. They are learning new wants, but they need to learn also the new methods and skills by which they can satisfy them—methods and skills which are 'better' than their traditional methods and skills because they can help them to grow more food, have better health, and possess more wealth than they have previously enjoyed.

But it is not enough to teach people how they can satisfy their immediate wants in the simplest and easiest

way. People will plant a new crop once they are sure that it will give them a good profit, and they will adopt a new tool, such as the plough, if it will ease their work. They will accept such changes because they benefit from them almost immediately. It is much harder to get them to contour-ridge or manure their land, because changes like these mean work without immediate reward. Similarly, it is easier to get them to have their cattle inoculated against disease than to limit the size of their herds to prevent the overgrazing and erosion of their pastures. Yet in the long run they must maintain the fertility of their land in order to live. These and other examples suggest that there is a real need for a community education which will help people to consider the future effects as well as the immediate benefits of the changes they are making. This is the only way of trying to ensure that the changes people make will give them lasting satisfaction.

Community education is needed for yet another reason. People who have some basic values in common, respect one another, and to some extent feel responsible for each other's welfare, can usually achieve a reasonably happy and satisfying community life together, even if they are poor and not very well educated. They feel that they 'belong' to their community, and because they share this feeling of 'belonging' they find it easy and natural to work together for the common good and to care for those members of the community—old or sick people and widows and orphans—who are in special need of help. Life in such communities gives people an underlying feeling of security. Whatever happens, they know they will not have to face it alone.

There were many more communities of this kind in

former times than there are today. This was largely because the old kind of community education provided a very thorough and practical training for a whole way of life. What young people were taught was in every way related to the life they lived, and they did not question it because it was hallowed by tradition and supported by existing custom. It was, moreover, the only way they knew, and they accepted their duties and responsibilities to the community as unquestioningly as they accepted the customary ways of growing crops, herding cattle, or bringing up children.

This is no longer true of most communities today. They are less isolated than they were and are now meeting many ideas which conflict with those of their traditional culture. Some of these ideas are brought back by men who have temporarily left the community to work for wages. Others are brought in by the school, or by health and agricultural extension workers, or by traders, and others, perhaps, by missionaries teaching a new religion. But by whatever channel these new ideas may enter the community, their effect is usually the same. While some people cling to tradition, others depart from it, so that people become confused and tend to lose their former strong sense of 'belonging'. Those who accept new ideas tend to become more and more conscious of their separate interests. They tend to question traditional authority; they find it harder to agree on matters affecting the welfare of the whole community; and often, too, they become less ready to accept the duties and responsibilities laid down by tradition and custom.

Many people blame this kind of situation on the school. Thus as early as 1935 we can find in a *Memo-
randum on the Education of African Communities*² a strong

suggestion that the school is encouraging 'an unregulated individualism which is destructive of the best elements of communal life', and that 'in so far as its influence tends to weaken social bonds, to undermine the traditions, affections, and restraints that unite men with one another and generation with generation and to introduce a new set of values entirely unrelated to the old, its effects are harmful rather than constructive'. Similarly, J. S. Furnivall, writing on school education in Burma, notes that the morals of the schoolboys were constantly under discussion. 'And, what was more disconcerting, the district with the best record for education was equally conspicuous for crime.'³

It is unrealistic as well as unfair to draw the conclusion that the whole blame for such modern community problems rests on the school. After all, as we have seen, the school is only *one* of several channels through which new ideas enter the community, and the school was not originally designed for purposes of community education. But it is also true that most communities now have major educational needs which are largely left unmet, and that some new kind of education is needed whether or not the school can provide it. This need is for an up-to-date community education which will serve to maintain and develop the sense of belonging which underlies all good community life, and which is directly concerned with local needs and local circumstances. In this sense it will serve the same community purposes as the outmoded forms of community education, but it will be different from them in one important respect. It will not be geared solely to the maintenance of local community tradition and custom. Its prime purpose will be to help people to reach new satisfactions by adjusting themselves to change.

Most people in the tropics still live in the kind of small rural community so far discussed. But many people live in towns, and many towns are now growing very quickly as people leave the countryside in search of work. Such people usually come as individuals, rarely as whole families, and in the town they live and work among strangers. At first, at any rate, they have no traditions in common with other people, no common experiences, and no common standards of conduct developed by years of living in the same place. And they can live in a town for many years and still hardly know their neighbours.

Such people face many difficulties, and even more than countryfolk they need help while trying to adjust themselves to a new way of life. Their prime need is for an education that will help them to evolve shared standards of conduct and a shared sense of belonging; in other words, to create an urban community.

II

APPROACHES TO COMMUNITY EDUCATION

IT has been realized for a long time that development in the tropics has given rise to problems of the kind discussed in the last chapter, and many people have made local attempts to solve them. But it is only quite recently—really only since the end of the Second World War—that most governments have become so

seriously concerned that they have evolved national policies to deal with them. Such policies are now generally known as community development policies.

Community development differs from other forms of development. Before the Second World War most governments were interested in the development of communications and material resources, and they saw their major problems as technical rather than human. It was the government's duty to plan development in the national interest. It was the people's duty to keep the peace, pay taxes, grow cash crops, and provide labour when and where it was needed. In general, governments were not much interested in people's local customs and beliefs, except when they hindered their development plans. For the rest, they were usually content to leave each local community to adapt itself to the changes they had introduced.

Community development is not a substitute for large-scale development, but supplementary and additional to it. Large-scale development nearly always has some kind of effect on local community life, and community development seeks to ensure that the effect will be to benefit the people. At its simplest, it does this by stimulating people to discuss their problems, clarify their wants, and decide what they themselves can do to satisfy them. This process has been well described in a United Nations report:

In all the cases seen, where real progress was being accomplished in local community development, the first step in that development had been sustained discussion by the community of its basic needs and most urgent problems. Progress in development had followed a fairly easily-recognized pattern. First, the people of the community, generally, if not always, stimulated by a 'group organizer'

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or 'extension teacher', had become aware of one or more common problems by sustained or repeated discussion. Second, they had, as a group, decided to accept the responsibility of pooling their intelligence, manpower, and local resources to attack one *specific* problem, the solution of which would meet some felt need of a large majority or all the families in the community. Third, they organized to solve that problem and, in every case studied, learned that they needed some specialized assistance and, in practically all cases, some material or financial assistance from outside the community. Fourth, they developed a degree of group responsibility, pride and zest which led them on to attack other community problems.¹

This quotation brings out very clearly the salient characteristics of this kind of community development work. The worker is there to stimulate people to discuss their problems and do something definite about them. But he does not direct them. It is for the people to decide what, if anything, they will do, and how they will organize themselves to do it; and it is only when they are doing all they can to help themselves that he will give them any additional aid they need.

Community project work, as it is called, is an immensely useful kind of community development. It has been the means by which many thousands of small communities in the tropics have been encouraged to provide themselves with roads, schools, clinics, co-operative shops, lorry parks and clean water-supplies, or even to rebuild whole villages, according to their local needs and circumstances. It has been popular with the people because it has shown them a really practicable way of getting what they want instead of waiting, possibly for years, for the government to give it to them. It has been popular with governments because it has

stimulated a great deal of local development at very little cost to government funds. At the same time it has helped to foster a happy relationship between government and people, raise local morale, and make people more ready to welcome new ideas.

In spite of these many advantages, the community project approach has a limited value, even in areas where it has proved most successful. This is because after a few years even the most enthusiastic community finds that it has provided itself with all the amenities it really needs and can provide. Moreover, people must want something before they will work for it, but in a really backward community they may not be conscious of wanting anything they do not already provide for themselves according to tradition and custom. For instance, people will not want a school unless they know what a school is and have a use for it; they will not want a clean water-supply until they have learnt to value clean water; and they will not want to build a road until they want contact with the outside world. The project approach assumes that people are already educated, however informally, to want something new, and it is therefore only successful where people have somehow already learnt new wants, and then only in respect of the new wants they have learnt.

Yet nearly all governments in the tropics diagnose needs for their rural communities that the people in them do not feel as wants: needs such as better methods of farming, of avoiding disease, of caring for babies and young children, and of cooking and preserving food. In so far as these are real needs, the people must be educated to understand them before they will act to satisfy them. This is why the *educational* as well as the project approach to community development is so very important.

The community project approach has other limitations, too. It often fails in badly disorganized communities where people cannot or will not agree to work together for the common good because differences of race, tribe, religion, or politics have made them hostile to each other. This is the most difficult of all the problems that confront the community development worker, and his success in solving it will largely depend on his skill in working with groups.

Apart from this the community project idea has one further major limitation. Even in the happiest and most united of communities people will normally work together on a project only when they share a common interest or have a common want, and when they realize that they can pursue their common purpose more successfully together than apart. But not all interests and wants are equally felt throughout the whole community, and some purposes are better achieved by people acting singly or in small groups rather than by whole community action. 'It has been noted in Eastern Nigeria that the size of the "community" tends to vary with the project: that while a whole village will turn out to labour on a road which is seen to benefit everyone, the cleaning of a water-supply that serves only a part of the village will be done by the villagers who will benefit most, with only token help from the rest.'² While some special interests are thus based on neighbourhood, others are based on sex, age, occupation, or on status within the community. Education for better health, for better farming, or for better living conditions in the home will more often result in small individual or group projects in home or garden than in concerted action on a big project by the whole community. These may be equally worthy

of help, and by giving it the worker will also be stimulating and helping the community as a whole.

In the last chapter we looked briefly at some of the changes which are taking place in local community life. We saw that nearly everywhere people are finding their traditional kind of community education less useful than in the past, and that they need a local education which is closely related to their present needs and circumstances.

In this chapter we have seen how this need is being met. We have noted the value of the community project, and of group and individual projects. But we have also noted that in no way do projects lessen the need for community education. People will not work for what they do not want, and the project is always the outcome of an educational process, often a very informal one, which makes people aware of what they want and teaches them how to get it.

Today nearly every government in the tropics realizes that people need a more modern form of community education, but it is one thing to recognize a need and quite another to meet it. It is the essence of the problem that people cannot provide it locally for themselves as they did in the old days. It must therefore be provided from outside.

There are two possible ways of tackling this problem. In every country there are many people who are already being paid to work among villagers. For instance, there are health and agricultural extension workers, co-operative officers, and, most numerous of all, there are the village schoolteachers. One approach, therefore, is to consider how far these existing workers can be used. The other is to recruit and train new workers.

Some governments have adopted one of these approaches and some the other, but most governments have adopted both. They employ community development workers, but as far as they can they try to ensure that the other kinds of workers will co-operate with them and help them in their work.

Whichever approach a government may adopt, it is committing itself to a policy which calls for a thorough rethinking of its officers' methods of work and attitudes to the people. Government officers are accustomed to think of themselves as agents of government and vested with some of the power and authority of government. This is particularly true of those administrative and departmental officers who often have to enforce government laws and regulations. Moreover, the people tend to see them in the same light as they see themselves—with power to order, direct, and even to punish. The same is also true of teachers, even village teachers, whenever they act as local representatives of outside authority—in this case the authority that controls the school—rather than as members of the village community.

The community development worker needs an attitude of quite a different kind. He has to establish friendly personal relations with people; to get alongside them, as it were, so that he can find out *with them* what their difficulties are and interest them in finding ways to overcome them. To do this he must be patient and unassuming, adept at getting people to think for themselves, and slow to put forward ideas of his own. He must be able to sit through discussions without dominating them, helping to reconcile differences and always emphasizing the common interest. He does not impose a solution. Some people would say he does not

even lead.³ His main job is to help people to make up their minds for themselves.

Most government officers are not used to working with people in this way. Many would reject it outright as something quite different from the job they have been trained for, and in any case as a wasteful use of time. They feel so obviously well qualified by education, training, and experience to decide for people what most needs doing and how it should be done, and they remain unimpressed by the claim that in the long run it is often better to work out with people the answers to their problems than to tell them what they ought to do.

Thus no government can safely assume that once it has officially approved a community development policy, its officers will enthusiastically and efficiently carry it out. It must first help them to understand it, convince themselves that it is good, and acquire the attitudes and skills to carry it out. In other words, the government must provide training on a big scale, and training in this context primarily means training in how to work *with* people rather than *for* them. It involves studying people's beliefs, values, and customs, and their relationships and attitudes to each other and to the worker, and how these affect the worker's attempts to stimulate them to learn how to tackle their problems and develop their community.

This general need for officers to reorientate themselves when their government adopts a community development policy cannot wholly be avoided by setting up a new department to carry it out. This is partly because the community development worker constantly needs the specialist help and advice of other departmental workers, and partly because the senior

positions in any newly formed department must normally be filled by transferring officers from other jobs. It is these men who are then responsible for recruiting and training the field workers. Unless the senior men can first reorientate themselves they will not be able to provide good training for their juniors. This, in fact, seems to be the root cause of many of the difficulties which the government of India has encountered. Too many of the staff now working for the Community Projects Administration, and too many of the technical officers whose co-operation the Administration needs, still think and act according to the old ideas. They tend to direct too much and leave too little scope for the common people to act on their own initiative and responsibility, although this is now a major aim of their government's policy.

This general discussion is relevant to our major interest in the school. School supervisors and teachers may also feel that they represent an outside 'authority', are vested with some of its power, and are better fitted than the people to judge what people need—at any rate as far as education is concerned. But *if* the school has a part it can play in community education, supervisors and teachers, like government officers, may also need to reorientate their attitudes to people, adopt new methods, and learn new skills. This is not easy, and in the next chapter we shall examine some of the difficulties.

III

THE TEACHER IN THE COMMUNITY

THE need for community development is now realized in most tropical countries, and in some of them very great efforts have been made to meet it. Thus in India the Community Projects Administration has already recruited and trained many thousands of village level workers. But even in those countries where the biggest efforts are being made, no government has ever been able to employ enough workers to do all that needs doing in every part of the country. The trouble is that people must be stimulated, helped, and educated where they live, and that most of them live in quite small communities which are often hard to reach from a town, especially during the rainy season when some of them cannot be reached at all. Moreover, since there are always many more communities than workers, no worker can give enough time to one without neglecting others.

Many people feel that this difficulty can be partly, if not wholly, overcome by enlisting the help of the teacher and the school, and the idea is certainly a most attractive one, at any rate at first sight. In some countries almost every village has a school, and even in the more backward areas the number of schools is now rapidly increasing. Each school serves its own local community and in each school there are one or more teachers, paid to educate, controlled by an outside authority, *and living in the community*. It is only too easy to assume that here, if anywhere, can be found the

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answer to the problem. At the worst, the teacher should be able to give the community development worker extremely useful help, and at best, he might even become a key community development worker in his own right.

A great deal of wishful thinking has grown up around this idea, but it has tended to overlook some of the real difficulties that must first be overcome. Thus it is not enough that the authority controlling the schools should be in favour of it. It must also win favour with the teachers and the people, and it cannot be assumed that they will favour it. Indeed, it is much more likely to conflict with their quite strongly-held ideas about the nature and purpose of the school and the proper duties of the teacher. In all such cases the prime need is to get the people to value the school as a source of community education, and the teachers willing and able to provide it. This cannot be done by imposing on them programmes they strongly dislike. It can best be done by discussing the need and ways of meeting it *with them*, and thereby developing a programme, however modest, with which they can agree. It is true that such a programme may fall far short of what the ardent reformer would like, but at least it would then seem reasonable and practicable to the people it will most affect, and for that reason have a much better chance of success.

It is easy to exaggerate the influence of the school and its effectiveness in introducing new ideas. If people value and use the school, it is because they see how it can serve *their* purposes. These purposes may be quite different from those of the authority which controls the school, and, when they conflict, as they may often do, it is the people's purposes which tend to prevail. Thus

people who still cling strongly to their own traditional values and customs do not value the school. They do not willingly send their children to it, even if a school is provided for them, and it has little or no influence on their way of life. They will begin to value it only as they come closer into contact with the outside world and accept its standards. In particular, this happens when they learn to value money and chances of individual, economic advancement. They do not learn these things from the school, but from almost every adult contact they have with people outside their own community, and as they learn so they come to value the school as a means of helping their children to a good start in life.¹ They now want the school, and if they have no school, they will ask that one should be provided for them. If they want it badly enough, they may even set to work to build a school themselves.

Most people in the tropics now want school education for their children and will make great sacrifices to get it, but for a strictly limited purpose. What they really want are salaried jobs for their children, and they know that to get them their children must first pass the examinations conducted by the school. Thus they are more interested in the results of the examinations than in the nature of the education the school provides. A good school is a school with good teachers, and a 'good' teacher is one who gets his children through their examinations.

This attitude to school education is deep-seated and widespread, and no would-be reformer can afford to ignore it. The people will be strongly against him if they feel that his 'reform' may threaten their children's chances in the examinations. This attitude is not limited to the tropics. We are told, for instance, that in the

United States opposition frequently develops when the school is thought to depart too far from its 'proper' and now traditional role: 'Adults are likely to consider the school in terms of their own educational experience, and when they see the school in their own community developing and promoting activities that seem to be a radical departure from the traditional educational programme, they frequently react in opposition to it—opposition which grows out of lack of knowledge and misunderstanding.' They then blame the teacher for neglecting the fundamentals and wasting their money and their children's time 'in trivial activities that have no educative or practical value'.²

Whether such criticism is justified or not, the mere fact that it is made shows that the teacher has failed to do his proper job. If the criticism is true, he is obviously failing in his duty to the children he is paid to educate. If it is untrue, it is equally clear that he has neglected to take the adults into his confidence and develop with them a programme with which they can agree. Yet the support of the community's adults is essential to the success of any real community school, and by failing to win it the teacher has failed in his first major task of community education.

The fact that most people already value the school for purposes quite unconnected with community development and even to some extent apparently incompatible with it, can make them slow and unwilling to accept the teacher as a community worker. They are used to thinking of the schoolteacher only in connexion with the formal education of their children, and they may never have thought of the school as having anything to do with community affairs and their own education in the day-to-day problems of community

life. Thus they are likely to look on the schoolteacher's attempts at community work as something outside his proper function, and an unwarranted interference in community affairs. It is not surprising, therefore, that the teacher in the Philippines who took the children out of the classroom into the village to clean up the village square was resentfully told to take them back into the school where she and the children belonged.³ From the people's point of view, she was not only neglecting her proper job in the school, but deliberately going out of her way to be offensive to them. By doing what she did, she had in effect implied that their village was dirty and uncared for.

It cannot, however, be assumed that the teacher will always be rebuffed in his attempts to do community work, any more than it can be assumed that he will always be successful. A great deal will always depend on the teacher himself—his tact and skill in getting on with people, and even more on his status in the local community. The higher his status, the more, that is, he is respected by the adult members of the community, the greater will be his potential influence as a community worker.

The status accorded to the teacher can vary very greatly from one community to another, and from one teacher to another in the same community. It is the product of many factors, some determining the value the community places on the teacher *as a teacher*, and others determining the respect it accords him *as a person*.

In most traditional societies, before the introduction of the school, children were mainly educated by their kinsfolk and by the community's elders. Teachers were not separately recognized as such, and those who taught had their status fixed by other factors than teaching.

Thus, when the schoolteacher first enters such a community, as a teacher he has no status. Since he comes from the external society, his local status primarily depends on the community's attitude to that society. The more the way of life of the external society is envied and desired, and the more able to teach that way of life the teacher is thought to be, the higher will be the status accorded to him and the greater his influence among the people.

Such a favourable attitude towards the teacher rarely occurs when schools are first introduced. People will reject the values and skills he tries to teach. This is the kind of situation which existed for many years in the Muslim areas of Northern Nigeria where the teacher, as teacher, was in the main rejected, and where the extent of his rejection could be measured by the difficulty in recruiting classes, wastage of pupils, poor attendances, and low standards of work. Essentially the same situation can still be found in the more backward areas of many tropical countries.

It is important to note that the schoolteacher in this kind of situation has no effective local status in the community in which he works. His only status is that of the stranger, and Redfield well illustrates this point in his second study of Chan Kom, when he states that the people 'are still of the opinion that the way of the *dzul* is not the way of the Indian and that the two kinds of people should live each in its own community. The teacher and his family are never fully within the village life; they are necessarily anomalies; they bring troublesome problems, as when a marriage is suggested between a girl of such a family and a boy of the village. The old Mexican who now lives in Chan Kom is the exception that proves the rule. Outsider as

he is, he works as the villagers do, attends the ceremonies, and labours on the public works.'⁴

We have a completely different situation when the traditional community begins to learn to value some aspects of the outside culture, for the teacher can then win real local status and respect if he can help the people to reach their new-found goals. Thus according to Mears, 'In tribal matters academic learning does not increase a man's standing, and the stranger, educated or uneducated, must occupy a humble position until he has won for himself general esteem. But as European influence extends its hold on the country, the importance of the teacher increases proportionately. His institutional training, his regular routine work, and his association with his Church give him a good practical knowledge of procedure in the conduct of business on European lines. . . . Above all, his ability to read, write, and speak a European language brings him into prominence even in the company of headmen and the councillors of the tribe. Thus today in any district where the teacher has personality and character he wins for himself as scribe, interpreter, and mediator with government officials, traders, and missionaries a position of respect.'⁵

It is inevitable when schools are first being introduced into a new area that the teacher should come as a stranger or alien to the community in which he is to teach. But as time goes on it becomes possible to train local people as teachers, and when this happens new factors operate to affect the teacher's status.

Most of the factors we have already considered in relation to alien teachers apply with equal force to local teachers. Both kinds of teacher are appointed by the external authority which controls the school, and both

derive the same kind of status from their work. But the locally-born teacher is also a member by birth of the community in which he teaches, and this will greatly affect his status as a teacher.

First let us note that most traditional communities associate high-status with age and that very many rural teachers are young. Thus Keesing writes that inevitably 'the local man has family and personal ties that affect his status, and that may make him anything but a free agent. He is not accepted purely on the basis of his merits as a teacher or a person. Too often he is a "prophet without honour", subject to suspicions or jealousies because of his attainments and his service to a foreign overlord. The fact that he is usually a young man may handicap him in some societies, as wisdom is often considered a prerogative of age. Many native societies are hierarchical, and unless the teacher is a person counted as of very high rank he and his school may have little prestige.'⁶

Keesing also suggests that it is the child of low status who is most likely to be attracted by the school and by the prospect of teaching. 'Frequently the clever pupil who gets on well in the school is a younger child who has no prospect of achievement in the indigenous society and so strives the harder to follow the new line of opportunity thus offered. He may even be a member of a very low social class "rescued" by a mission or other agency and, under the segregated conditions of a boarding school, "making good".'⁷

If such a child returns to teach his own people, he is often looked down upon and is allowed no influence in community affairs. In Samoa, for instance, the teacher's position is not entirely satisfactory. 'He is debarred from any direct leadership in the community and, if he

is energetic, must depend upon his personal influence with one of the *matai*. . . . This state of affairs is probably only temporary. Another group of men, the native pastors, have attained a position of as much dignity and influence as that of the *matai*. It is possible that in the future teachers as a group will be accepted as occupying a position demanding respect . . . the more able Samoan teachers must be spared the humiliating position of inferiority when they know their abilities entitle them to something better.⁸

While in some countries schoolteachers start with a low status and can only hope slowly to gain a position of influence and respect, in others they may be lucky enough to inherit a high status from the beginning. In Thailand, for example, the village priests have always been highly honoured and respected, and at one time they were also the village teachers. But now, for at least a generation, they have handed over this function to teachers employed by the State. 'Every school has a headmaster and at least one other teacher. The State schools give religious teaching and relations are harmonious between the School and the Wat [priesthood]. Traditionally the pupil pays respect to the teacher even when school days are over; this tradition of respect has carried over from the religious to the secular teacher. Only those who have passed through the four primary grades, and are therefore classified as literate, are now allowed to become candidates for the priesthood; and this gives the Wat an additional interest in village education.'⁹

The status locally awarded to teachers thus varies very widely and for many reasons, but it certainly cannot be assumed that most rural teachers in most countries enjoy a high enough status to be able to exert

a real influence on the communities in which they live. If there are some countries like Thailand and like the Philippines, where, so we are told, the people will not usually act on anything new to their experience without first consulting the school teacher,¹⁰ there are many other countries where most village teachers are more like the village teacher in Pakistan who was in no position to influence anyone. 'Badly overworked and poorly paid, any time and strength he had left over from his overcrowded classes had to go into cultivating the paddy that kept him alive. He had no time for organizing and conducting public meetings. Moreover, as one of the least prosperous individuals in the village, it was not his advice that the other people sought or followed.'¹¹

Although every tropical country has numbers of selfless, devoted, and well-qualified teachers working in rural schools, few people would deny that there are very many teachers who are much less interested in their work and less well qualified to do it. Nor, indeed, is this surprising. On the whole, salaries are lower in rural areas than in the towns, and lowest of all in the most backward areas. Again, living conditions tend to be most attractive in the large towns, and least attractive in small villages. Thus the best-qualified teachers prefer to work in the larger rural schools or in towns, and it is the least well-qualified teachers, who cannot get a better post, who have to go to the smaller schools and the more backward areas. Yet it is in just such areas that interested and well-qualified teachers are most needed if the schools are to become effective centres of community education. As Ryburn says of India: 'The result of the present low pay and status of the teacher is that in the villages the numerous problems which could be tackled by teachers with a better cultural and

economic background are not being tackled. The teacher is all too frequently concerned mainly with augmenting his pittance in other ways besides his regular teaching work.¹² For many such teachers the main attraction of an otherwise unattractive job is that the hours of work are short and that there are regular holidays with no work at all.

Wherever the teacher has this kind of attitude to his work, he is unlikely to co-operate willingly in any policy which would involve him in doing more work, even if he had enough influence over people to do it well. It is thoroughly unrealistic to urge such a teacher 'to promote an understanding of the social environment and of the customs and laws of the tribe; to make as large a use as possible of local folklore, stories, songs, arts, and crafts; and to strengthen the loyalties and social bonds of native society'. And it is even more unrealistic to suggest that he is 'the chief agency through which new ideas can reach the people'.¹³

Nor, one may think, can difficulties of this kind be effectively overcome by issuing 'a firmly-worded circular to all primary schoolteachers, warning them that the success of the territory's schemes of mass education depends a good deal on their support'; stating that it is not enough to spend thirty hours a week teaching children in class and the rest of the time, as so many do, looking after their private affairs; and insisting 'that in every bush village the school, however humble, should become the hub of community life'.¹⁴ No agency can compel enthusiasm and conviction, yet it is just these qualities that are essential for success.

The teacher's attitude to community education will be influenced by his attitude to people as well as to his work. There are many teachers, headmasters of small

village schools, who are neither well qualified nor well paid, but who like living among their own people and have won their friendship and respect. Such men can become real leaders in the villages. There are also many others, especially among the better educated and better qualified teachers, who dislike living in villages, despise rural people, and are hoping for promotion to a larger and preferably urban school. Such men take little interest in community affairs. Their only real interest is in themselves.

These two quite different attitudes of the teacher are very clearly illustrated by what happened when adult literacy work was begun some years ago in the Udi Division of the Eastern Region of Nigeria. 'Certificated teachers are found to be the least public-spirited of all the people who were called upon to assist their illiterate brothers to learn to read and write. Wherever they were approached they immediately started grumbling either that they were underpaid ("and what remuneration might [they] expect?"), or that they were "willing to help, but had not been approached in the right way", whatever that may be. . . . The backbone of the whole scheme consisted of the uncertificated headmasters of the vernacular schools . . . who were prepared to believe the district officer when he told them that they were doing a grand job by helping to educate a whole village as well as their schoolchildren'.¹⁵

The Minister of Education in the Western Region of Nigeria was even more outspoken in a speech he made in 1956. He felt that the attitude of the better-qualified teachers was 'alarming'. 'Their attitude appears to be that they should do the minimum amount of work in the classroom and none at all outside it without extra allowances or overtime pay.'¹⁶

The well-qualified teacher is even more likely to have an unfavourable attitude to the people when, as sometimes happens, he has been posted to a backward area against his will, owing to the shortage of well-trained local teachers. Thus in Ghana, 'teachers who have been transferred to the North have looked upon this as a punishment. Many, therefore', notes a Ghana teacher, 'were indifferent to their work and have been wholly out of sympathy with the people.'¹⁷

In the long run the success or failure of attempts to provide community education through the school will depend more on the teacher's attitude to people than on any other factor. 'The teacher', writes Miss Ritsert, 'has a great responsibility, not only for seeing that the child acquires knowledge, but, more important still, that he or she acquires a right attitude of mind to life, and that attitude to life may be summed up in the thought that he is here not only, or chiefly, to *get*, but to *give*.' But, she suggests, unless the teacher himself has this attitude, neither children nor adults will learn it from him.¹⁸

Several conclusions of practical importance emerge from this discussion of attitudes and are worth listing:

1. Both teachers and people may already have deep-seated attitudes to the school and to each other.
2. While some of these attitudes may be favourable, many others may be unfavourable to the use of the school or the teacher for the purposes of community education.
3. The incidence of favourable and unfavourable factors is likely to vary between one community and another, as well as between one region and another, and one country and another.
4. School-community programmes should be designed

with due regard to the existing attitudes of teachers and parents, both favourable and unfavourable.

5. Existing unfavourable attitudes may be hard to change, but attempts to change them should not on that account be neglected.

6. Attempts to modify unfavourable attitudes must start with those of the teacher, since whatever is done in the community through the school must be done through him.

This sixth conclusion takes us straight to the hard core of the problem of developing community education through the school. Only if the teacher is convinced that community education is important, and a right and proper function for himself and for his school, will he want to do this kind of work, and only if he knows what to do and how to do it, will he be able to tackle it successfully. Thus in nearly every case the first need in any realistic programme of community education through the school is to help the teacher to reorientate his existing ideas and to learn new skills. 'One of the greatest mistakes that may be made', says Dr. G. S. Perez, 'is believing that the teaching of community projects may be done empirically and without the need of qualified teachers.'¹⁹

The same need for the reorientation and retraining of teachers was felt by the Committee appointed at the Wardha Conference in 1937 to draw up a detailed scheme for Gandhi's idea of basic education. They reported that 'The proper training of teachers is perhaps the most important condition for the success of this scheme. Even in normal circumstances the quality of the teachers generally determines the quality of the education imparted. When a radical reconstruction of the entire educational system is contemplated, the

importance of the teachers who work out these changes is greatly accentuated. It is therefore essential that these teachers should have an understanding of the new educational and social ideology inspiring the scheme, combined with enthusiasm for working it out.²⁰

Attempts to orientate teachers to community education will be discussed in Chapter IX. All we need to note here is that most attempts at this kind of training have not been very successful, and that in many cases no serious attempt has been made at all. Even in the Philippines, which has a long established national policy of community education through the school, the training colleges have generally failed to adapt their training to it in any really practical way. Thus Pedro Orata can write in 1954 that the situations in which the trainee-teachers practise are 'anything but comparable' with the situations in the *barrio* and central schools: and he suggests that the training programmes should be amended to provide some real experience of school and community relationships.²¹

This suggests that training college staffs may sometimes view with disfavour the idea of educating the community through the school. If they dislike the new policy, or think it impracticable, they will not carry it out with enthusiasm, even while they give lip-service to it. In fact, success with such a policy depends on the willingness of many people and institutions to accept change—not only parents and teachers, but also educational administrators, the staffs of secondary schools, training colleges and colleges of higher education, and members of examination boards and education committees. Such willingness can too easily, and wrongly, be assumed.

It is easy for the theorist sitting in his study to expound a philosophy of education and to write in terms of 'ought', 'must', and 'should', or for a senior administrator to draft a memorandum setting out a new policy, but it is quite another matter to win the co-operation of the teachers and parents of the children whose education the new policy will affect. The changes they dislike will be hard to introduce and harder still to maintain.

This, then, is why I have spent so much time discussing the attitudes of teachers and people to each other and the school. And if I have stressed mostly the more unfavourable attitudes, it is because they highlight the need for care. Plans which neglect them are likely to fail, and are therefore impractical, however attractive they may first appear. Realistic planning will take note of them, adapt itself to them, and accomplish more.

There is another reason for noting attitudes with care. On the whole, administrators, teachers, and parents are reasonable people, and this is another way of saying that they may have good reasons for any unfavourable attitudes they have. Is it really unreasonable, for instance, for a parent to want for his child the kind of education that gives him the best chance of making his way in the world? Or is it not natural for the poorly paid village teacher to dislike the idea of becoming a worker who can be asked 'to organize the co-operative society in the village, to improve agriculture, to organize adult literacy campaigns, to run a night school, to dig latrines and pits for the village, to plan houses, to grow flowers, to pour oil on mosquito-infested ponds, and, incidentally, to teach his pupils four or five hours a day'?²² It is easy for the enthusiastic

reformer to make quite unrealistic plans for others. The way to test the realism of a plan is to test it against the attitudes of those the plans affect.

In the long run reforms cannot be imposed; they must be wanted. This means that those who feel that the teacher and the school should contribute effectively to community education and development have to be able to convince parents and teachers that it is a practicable idea and compatible with their existing purposes for the school. Community development means working *with* people, not against them, and this applies as much to the school as to any other agency, as we shall see in the chapters which follow.

PART TWO .°

METHODS AND
TECHNIQUES



INTRODUCTION

THE community development worker has to help people to overcome the barriers which hinder them from improving their community life. One of these barriers is ignorance and the other unwillingness to work together. In under-developed areas ignorance is the main barrier, and here the problem is how best to get the people interested in new ideas and in learning the knowledge and skills they need to carry them out. The second barrier is met wherever the people are so divided by race, religion, or class, or so engrossed in their own private affairs, that they cannot or will not agree on matters affecting the welfare of them all. This difficulty may be encountered in any community, but it most commonly arises in the more highly developed areas, and especially in industrial centres and in towns.

In so far, then, as the teacher tries to meet the needs of the community, he is likely to meet difficulties of these two kinds, and like every other community worker he will need two kinds of skill. To dispel ignorance and interest people in new ideas he will need skill as a *teacher*, while to bring people together and help them to agree he will also need some of the human relations skills of the *group worker*. In most communities he will need both skills in order to succeed.

But what scope has the teacher got of teaching or influencing the adults of his community, even if we can assume that he is willing to try? His position is quite different from that of other community workers. While they are especially appointed to work with adults, the teacher spends his working day with the children in the

classroom. At best, therefore, he has much less time than other community workers for adult community work.

On the other hand, the teacher who lives and works in the same community, as most rural schoolteachers do, can get to know the people better than the community worker who can visit it only occasionally. Moreover, his school work and his community work can sometimes overlap. *In the main, the schoolteacher can best educate and influence the community by the work he does in or for the school.*

The basis of any attempt at community education through the school must be the teacher's interest in people, his willingness to learn from them, and his desire to help them. Then, as he comes to understand their local needs and circumstances, he can begin to think out how to interest them in local problems and ways of dealing with them.

We have already seen that the teacher should take careful note of the people's attitude to himself and to the school. This means that he has to work slowly and cautiously, starting with those changes which are likely to obtain the greatest support and arouse the least opposition. There are in fact several ways in which he can work.

He can start, for instance, by revising the school's curriculum in order to interest the children in their own community and help them to understand how people could increase their wealth, safeguard their health, and develop a more satisfying way of life. He can hope to get some of this knowledge carried over into the community by means of school projects, and individual projects carried out by children in their homes. He can also make a direct approach to the community's adults by seeking their help and advice

about the school, and by offering them whatever facilities the school can usefully provide. In addition, as an educated member of the community, he can support and help the community's adult groups.

Some successful and many unsuccessful attempts to provide community education through the schools have already been made in tropical countries. In the next four chapters I shall discuss a good many of them. It may then be possible to reach conclusions of practical value to those administrators and teachers who want to ensure that they are contributing all they can to the happiness and welfare of the people the schools exist to serve.

IV

COMMUNITY SERVICE PROJECTS

THE teacher's prime responsibility is to the children, and this is as true of the community school as of schools of the ordinary kind. The difference is that the teacher in the community school is more purposefully trying to relate his work to the life the children lead outside the school. By doing so, he hopes to make their education more immediately interesting and meaningful, as well as more useful to them when they have grown up. Thus he gives them practice in applying the knowledge and skills he teaches them to local conditions. He may also give them opportunities of working together for the good of the community in the hope that they will go on doing so in later life.

If this were all the teacher could hope for, he would have to wait a long time to see results. But in fact he

may try to do more. Though working mainly with the children, *through them* he may also try to influence the adult community, and thus achieve two aims at one and the same time.

A very common way of trying to do this is to organize community service projects. In most villages in the tropics there are plenty of useful things the school-children can do. Usually, no one feels particularly responsible for keeping the open places and the lanes between the houses free from dirt and litter; for filling in holes which quickly become muddy puddles, even breeding-places for mosquitoes when it rains; for clearing away the rubbish that tends to collect and block up open drains; or for making small bridges so that people can cross them easily.

These jobs and others like them suit the teacher's purpose very well. They require no special tools or materials, and very little strength or skill. They are easily divided into small units of work which can be distributed among the children. Each unit can be quickly completed to produce a result which everyone, child or adult, can clearly see.

This kind of work can be materially useful in the sense that it helps, in however small a way, to make the village a better and healthier place to live in, but from the teacher's point of view its main value lies in the effect it may have on the attitude of the children towards community service, and on the attitude of the community towards the school.

It is important here to note the stress on the word 'may' in the last sentence, for everything depends on how the children and the adults feel about it. The effect will not be good, and may even be positively bad, if the children feel that they are being made to do unneeded

work against their will; if they and their parents feel that the time would be better spent on bookwork in the classroom; or if the community feels that the teacher is interfering in matters outside his proper sphere.

The teacher can best avoid this danger if he first discusses the idea of doing this kind of work with the children, and possibly with their parents and the community's leaders as well. It is much better for the teacher to know about their objections in advance rather than arouse resentment by ignoring them. Indeed, it is mainly by getting the children to make up their own minds about whether or not they would like to do some community work that the teacher has the best chance of really influencing their attitude towards it; and he is all the more likely to succeed if he can encourage them to suggest the actual jobs they think they could most usefully do, and how they could organize themselves to do it. The teacher's main task, then, is to get the children interested in the idea of working for the community and involved in planning what they will do and how they will do it. This provides the best guarantee that they will enjoy it. The more they enjoy it, the more it is likely to influence their future attitude to community work.

These were the underlying ideas of a very interesting Labour Week scheme which was begun in Kashmir in 1939¹ and which has since spread to some other parts of India. The scheme itself was only a part of a larger educational reorganization intended to give a new orientation to the State schools, 'particularly in the direction of inculcating a sense of the dignity of labour and cultivating the capacity to work together for constructive and socially worthy causes'. To encourage

initiative and develop habits of self-discipline, the children were organized in groups; and the projects were carefully chosen and planned to ensure that every one of the tens of thousands of children would have something worth doing and suited to his strength and skill. Although the programme was mainly intended to influence the attitude of the schoolchildren, it was also hoped that it would favourably affect the attitude of the uneducated people to the schools, and thus help to close the social gap that existed between the educated and uneducated classes.

A great deal of the success of this scheme was due to the way it was planned and carried through. It was first thoroughly discussed at a central conference of educational officials, then at local meetings of school inspectors and headmasters, and finally at staff and student meetings at each individual school. In all that was done it was fully realized that the educational value of the scheme depended 'primarily on the intelligent and willing co-operation of the students, and that it was the business of teachers to help them to realize that they were participating in a significant and freely chosen activity of great social value'. It was for this reason that great care was taken to arouse the interest of the students and win their co-operation in each successive year. Care was also taken to think out each detail of the work. It was realized, for example, that tools would be required, and local arrangements were made to borrow them, and make them available to the students when and where they were needed.

During the Week, students throughout the State cleaned and improved both their own school and the local village or town. They whitewashed their school buildings, cleared stones, glass and other rubbish from

the lanes and streets, cleaned springs and ponds, filled in holes, improved drains, constructed latrines, reading-rooms and other buildings, and dug water-channels. They also offered to teach illiterate adults to write their names, carried placards, held meetings, and sang songs to persuade people to join the adult education centres; did social service work in hospitals, and organized first-aid centres. In some towns they even asked the local council to take action about particularly insanitary places they had noticed during the course of the Week.

We are told that the students greatly enjoyed this annual Week, that it brought 'the teachers and the pupils into a new companionship of shared service', and that it brought them both into a close and friendly relationship with the local community. The organizers of the scheme had expected many people to look on the Week as a waste of the students' time, 'as taking the students away from their books to a type of work which could as well be left to labourers, coolies, masons, and scavengers'. In the main, these fears proved unfounded, largely, we are told, because of the good sense and tact of the teachers. 'In many cases, the parents, caught up by the movement, joined their children in the work of school repairs and decorations, or of cleaning up the town or the village.'

This scheme succeeded because the organizers first thought carefully about the difficulties they were likely to meet, and then how they could overcome them. By making the scheme State-wide, involving every school, they ensured that no child or parent could feel that examination prospects were adversely affected. By freeing the teachers from all other duties during this one week they avoided asking the teachers to do extra

work which they might quite possibly resent. By stressing that the scheme had the full support of the State, they gave the teachers more confidence, if they needed it, to work in the community outside the school. No teacher could feel that he was on his own in a new and untried activity. He knew that every other teacher in the State was taking part in the scheme at the same time, and although the work was done in the community, it was still a school activity whose main purpose was the education of the children. The teacher was free from the embarrassment of being expected willy-nilly to teach and influence grown-up people. Moreover, the first year was the worst. People quickly learnt to accept and welcome Labour Week as an annually recurring feature of community life.

In some countries, and mainly for students from the towns, *work camps* are organized for community service work in rural areas. Such camps are usually held during the school holidays and may last for any period from two to eight or ten weeks.

One of the best-known schemes of this kind began in Northern Rhodesia in 1947. It was felt that the crowded home and school conditions in the Copperbelt towns gave boys very little chance of learning lessons of self-discipline, self-reliance, self-respect, and respect for other people, or for developing their initiative and qualities of leadership and friendship. The camps were organized to meet this need in an enjoyable and useful way, and at the same time to enable the boys to 'get to know something of the countryside, not only of the natural life there, but of the people and their way of life, their problems and, most important, the interdependence of town and country'.²

The camps flourished from the start, and they were

so demonstrably successful in their major aim of character training that camps are now organized every year for boys from almost every part of the Protectorate. In 1955, for instance, there were ten separate camps lasting variously from four to ten weeks and attended by over 1,200 boys.

A camp may take as few as sixty and as many as 300 boys. The boys are organized in groups, each with several teachers, and each group competes with other groups in making its own pole and grass shelters and other living accommodation, and in the daily programme of work and play. 'The mornings are usually spent on the practical work projects and the afternoons and evenings on scouting, games and competitions, first aid, physical training, and camp-fire concerts and discussions, and so on, all with character-training as the main theme. The spirit of adventure and fun, the excitement of learning new things and new ways of living, the thrill of competition with other groups in the camps, the joy of helping others and the sense of achievement at the end are all experiences which make these camps so valuable and popular.'³

The projects are very carefully chosen. A good project has two characteristics. On the one hand it must clearly and directly benefit the community and thus serve to foster the boys' sense of social service. On the other it must be of a kind that enables the boys each day to see some clear evidence of the work they have done, and at the end of the camp some visible and lasting result of their labour. 'The long list of work projects undertaken so far includes the construction of buildings for a school for the blind, for a colony for tuberculous Africans, for schools of various types, including a community development training centre;

and of rural roads, bridges, fish-dams, anti-erosion contour ridges, water furrows, and small irrigation and water conservation schemes. Community service camp boys have helped to prepare the shelters and pens for agricultural shows and to run the shows; they have conducted mass literacy campaigns for the villagers living near their camps; they have found old homeless women and built houses for them. The boys build their own camps, using local materials, and run them themselves; they establish their own co-operative tuck shops and organize their own recreational and sporting activities.³

Reading about these camps and hearing about them from those who have visited them one comes to the conclusion that the main reason for their success is that the boys *enjoy* them. 'And finally', writes Mr. Mandona, a head teacher and camp organizer, 'this year as is always the case after every camp I report that the boys were happy and enjoyed themselves, and are now most interested and looking forward to these camps.'⁴ They enjoy them because they feel that the work they do really is worthwhile, because the teachers work with them, because of the keen but friendly group rivalry in work and play; and, in short, because in these and other ways the camps succeed in providing an agreeable and even exciting contrast to the rather dull and humdrum normal life of the town-bred boy.

But do these camps do more than provide boys from the towns with a useful and enjoyable holiday? Many people in Northern Rhodesia think that they do. We are told, for instance, of 'the friendliness and mutual spirit of helpfulness that appear to develop between the campers and the local population':⁵ and we are told, too, that 'on return to their schools, the campers have

formed their own teams in each of the large schools, and are not only remembering what was taught at the camps, but they are passing it on to the rest of the school'.⁶ The camps are also said to have a beneficial effect on the teachers. 'It is a fact, of course, that the camps have an even greater beneficial effect on the staff, and many a teacher has "found his feet" at the camps and his work in the school has improved considerably.'⁷

Two other points about these camps are worth noting. A boy will usually go to two camps while he is at school. This custom provides most camps with a strong nucleus of experienced boys to maintain the ideals and traditions developed at the earlier camps and to hand them on to the newcomers. This has been found very valuable. The second point is that the organizers quickly learnt from hard experience the need for good preliminary planning. 'In view of last year's experience', wrote one of the camp organizers in 1950, 'bricks were already made, and poles and grass cut, before the camps were started. Doors and window-frames can be made locally *provided* timber is available as soon as the boys arrive at the camps. Cement for ant-courses, nails, screws, hinges, &c., must all be ready.'⁸ Community service is not just a matter of high ideals. It needs supporting by careful attention to practical details.

Kashmir Labour Week and the Northern Rhodesian Community Service Camps are only two out of many attempts to organize students for community work with the prime object of educating them in the ideal of giving service to others. Thus a residential school or college which serves a whole region may decide to 'adopt' a local community for this purpose. The Vidhya Bhawan social service scheme in India⁹ and the

Achimota College social welfare scheme in Ghana are both of this kind, and A. G. Fraser, former Principal of the College, is quite certain of its value. 'Some years ago', he writes, 'Sir Maurice Dorman, then Chief Welfare Officer in the Gold Coast, told me that there they had more welfare officers than all the rest of Africa put together, and most of them were giving their services free. The great majority, he said, came from these early days of Achimota.'¹⁰

All the schemes so far mentioned have been directly sponsored by the school, but in some countries similar schemes for students have also been started by youth organizations. In Malaya, students and other young people are invited to form Youth Service Teams. These teams, each consisting of ten young people, adopt one of the new villages in the surrounding area. The team organizes adult classes, teaches games to the young children, and helps the aged, the crippled, and the blind. It may also undertake manual work such as levelling a playing-field, or painting and decorating a community hall.¹¹ In India, community service work camps are organized for the school holidays by national youth organizations such as the National Cadet Corps.¹² Such youth service schemes are intended to serve exactly the same purpose as those directly sponsored by the school.

What general conclusions can we come to about community service projects? We may perhaps agree that the outlook and interests of the students can be influenced by such projects, and that under favourable circumstances this influence may sometimes persist on into adult life. The success of a project seems to depend on the teacher getting the students really interested in planning and organizing the work they are going to

do; in promoting friendly rivalry between the different work groups; and in arranging that tools and materials are readily available when they are required. All real success depends on the students enjoying the project and feeling that it is worthwhile.

At the same time it must be recognized, that however useful the community service project may be in influencing the attitudes of the students, it does very little else. All that most projects demand are goodwill and willingness to work on the part of the students, and not even this on the part of the community's adults. In fact, the kind of community service project discussed in this chapter is ill-designed to stimulate people to tackle their own problems for themselves. This is particularly true of the community service workcamp. 'Workcamps', writes Biddle, 'have become overpopular in the hands of some religious and service organizations. Because attention has been concentrated too much upon benefit for students, the activity has sometimes become unrestrained "do-goodism". Or, when students have come into a community for the few weeks of a single summer (without reference to events preceding or following their advent), the activity has become an unrelated expression of vague goodwill. In either case, citizens are denied educational urging towards the responsibility of self-help.'¹³

In fact, one might go even further than this. While experience shows that the community service project will often make people more friendly to the school, though even this cannot always safely be assumed, it may have a bad effect on the community if the people merely accept what is being done for them, and do nothing for themselves. It is the essence of community development that people should be stimulated to help

themselves and become less rather than more dependent on outside help. In practice, this means that the school, like every other community development agency, should plan community work *with* people rather than *for* them. As far as adults are concerned, the real value of the community service project depends almost entirely on how far the school succeeds in stimulating their interest and enlisting their help in planning and carrying it out.

Many community service projects, especially those undertaken by the small village schools, are so simple and straightforward, and require so little skill, that no one learns anything new from them. And yet, after all, teaching is the main function of the school, and in most rural communities in the tropics there is much that both children and adults *could* learn which would be of use to them in community life. This suggests other fields of usefulness for the school. In the next two chapters, therefore, I shall consider some of the attempts which have been made to relate the teaching of the school more closely to local community life, and to find ways of teaching it, not only to the children, but to the adults as well.

V

CURRICULUM AND METHOD

MOST schools in the tropics were originally modelled on those of western countries, and, in spite of the great difference in environment, they taught much the same things without relating them in any effective way to the culture of their own country. Thirty years ago in



1. COMMUNITY SERVICE PROJECTS

Schoolchildren in the Philippines at work cleaning the streets.



II. WORKCAMPs

Above: Northern Rhodesia. Schoolboys providing themselves with huts.

Below: India. At work on a project.

British tropical Africa, for instance, it was common for boys and girls in the secondary grammar schools to follow the same history, geography, and science syllabuses, use the same textbooks and take the same examination papers as students in Great Britain.

This is no longer true. Today in nearly every tropical country children study the history and geography of their own territory and the science they learn is related to their tropical environment. But the teaching in the schools still tends to remain bookish and formal and there is often no very obvious connexion between what the children are taught and the kind of life they are likely to lead when they have grown up.

This has been recognized as a problem in Europe and the United States as well as in the tropics, and there have been many attempts to solve it, more often in rural areas than in the towns, and more often at the primary than at the secondary level.

One line of approach has been to bring the local community culture into the school, so that the school seems rather less of a foreign institution. At its simplest, this may mean no more than including local stories and folklore into the readers intended for the lowest classes, or the teaching of local songs and dances. But even this can have an unfortunate effect if the songs and stories are uncritically selected. 'With each new series', writes Seaga of the West Indian school readers, 'there has been a greater concentration on material from West Indian culture in order to present more familiar topics to the young readers.' But many parents think that some of the stories selected are unsuitable for the school, partly because they belong to a slave past which they would rather forget, and partly because they idealize cunning, or even outright dishonesty. As one woman said: 'Is

only black people tek dem kind of story serious and is why we so idiot': and another, objecting to the moral of the stories as improper for the children, commented, 'It only teach dem to lie and t'ief.' Some parents also object to the inclusion of calypsos in the music syllabus because these songs are associated only with the dance-halls.¹ These people do not object to the school using local cultural material. What they object to is any emphasis on the local characteristics they least admire.

Language is an important part of any local culture, and for this reason many people feel that it is wrong to use a foreign language, such as English, as a chief medium of instruction in the lower classes of the primary schools. They believe that the mother tongue should be used to establish liaison between the school and the community, and they are supported in their belief, *inter alia*, by an experiment carried out in the Philippines. It is claimed that this six-year experiment, carefully conducted and scientifically assessed, proves that Filipino children in the first two primary grades learn better and faster in their own native tongue. 'Whether or not they can continue schooling after completion of the fourth grade, they will have acquired the rudiments of an education which is rooted in their own native soil.'² But more is claimed than merely classroom achievement. 'Additional evidence of the superiority of the experimental group has been gathered (from parents and teachers) which tends to make the case for the vernacular stronger still.'³ The effect of starting with the vernacular and continuing with English after the first two years on bridging the gap between the schools and the homes is said to be 'tremendous'.

Some attempts have also been made to teach and emphasize aspects of the local culture even in secondary

grammar schools. One such school is the Queen Victoria School, Fiji.⁴ This is a boarding school which draws its pupils mainly from the villages, where the traditional way of life still persists.

The staff at this school are consciously trying to preserve the best of Fijian culture and at the same time to give the best of the Western culture. All the boys study the Fijian language for at least an hour a week and take it as one of their subjects in the Cambridge Overseas Certificate Examination. They also study Fijian dances, music, and customs, and practise them throughout the year. 'We teach the Fijians European manners and at the same time we try to teach ancient Fijian manners, trusting that in actual practice there will be a happy mixture of the two. And that in fact is what happens. Visitors coming to us are aware that the Fijians have their own code of behaviour, and they know that our boys are also in contact with European teachers. Thus if our visitors are received in Fijian style they are quite happy, and they are equally happy if they are received in European style.'⁵

Even the school organization is partly based on the Fijian communal way of life. The boys 'look after their hostel communally and tend the hostel garden communally. This has some resemblance to the old order in a Fijian village, in which the boys used to live in a communal house and were organized as a group for communal duty.'⁵

The staff of this school are well aware that they are trying to do two apparently incompatible things at one and the same time: on the one hand to strengthen and preserve Fijian communal culture, and on the other to introduce a Western culture which is as individualistic as Fijian culture is communal. They realize that

Fijian culture is already changing and will change much more, but they believe that they can best equip young Fijians to meet the problems of the future and promote the welfare of their people by emphasizing both cultures in the school.

This is useful and, indeed, necessary, but if the school does no more than this it evades the main issue, which is to help the students to live in their *existing* culture. This is neither traditional nor Western, but often a rather unstable mixture of conflicting elements from both, and liable to further change as more 'development' takes place. People in such culture-contact situations live in two worlds, each with its own values, customs, and beliefs. The old ideas and the new frequently conflict and people have constantly to choose between them, or find some way of reconciling them in their daily lives.

If the school is to educate children for community life, it must educate them to deal better with real problems of this kind. It can do this in several ways: first, by helping them to see what is currently happening in their local community; second, by acquainting them with new ideas and helping them to think about how to reconcile them with the old; and third, by giving them practical training in some of the skills they are likely to need in community life.

Children can learn quite a lot about their local community during their first two or three years at the village school. They will already know a good deal and with the encouragement of the teacher will soon find out much more. They can start in the simplest way by finding out about the most commonly eaten foods, then about how these foods are obtained from farms and gardens and from the surrounding bush or, in the case of some foods, from more distant places. This can be

followed by a study of local crafts, starting with locally produced finished articles and working back through all the stages of making them from the basic raw materials; and of the reasons for the exchange of articles within the local community, with neighbouring communities, and with other countries. In the same way they can study the organization of their local community in order to see how people co-operate, and for what purposes; how disagreements are settled; how money helps people to exchange their goods and services; how local transport increases wealth; how taxes help people to organize common services through their governments; and how the local community governs itself and is governed.

Since each study is concerned with only one village, and each community is unique, the teacher has to make himself completely familiar with the life of this one village, work out his own syllabus, and get the children interested in collecting information about each topic before they discuss it in class. His main purpose in the classroom is not so much to give the children facts, most of which they will already know, as to stimulate them to discuss and co-ordinate the information they have collected, and in this way come to a better understanding of the changes that are taking place in village life.

Unless the village teacher is interested in working in this way, and is given some help, he is unlikely to do it well. Since such studies are essentially local, and different in each village, it is impracticable and indeed undesirable to provide him with a textbook. He is best helped by means of training and refresher courses, preferably supplemented by a handbook to give him ideas and to help him plan his work.⁶

Essentially the same idea appears to underlie the teaching of civics under very different circumstances in a residential grammar school situated in a cosmopolitan town.⁷ Boys come to King's College, Lagos, from all parts of Nigeria and from many different tribes, and during their first four years at school they spend one period every week discussing practical problems of relationships and behaviour between themselves in school and in the adult Nigerian community outside the school. 'Sometimes we discuss moral problems which the boys themselves raise and I act more as a guide than a teacher.'⁸

The boys also organize themselves into groups to observe and study conditions in Lagos in their leisure time. Among the topics studied in 1955 were the Lagos slums, the health system, the Lagos Town Council, and the aims of the Nigerian political parties. 'Every week', writes the master in charge of these studies, 'two or three of the groups present interim reports, which are discussed and criticized by the other groups. At the end of the term they give their formal written reports. . . . During all civics lessons I try to remain completely impartial. The dangers of imposing standards and ideas from without can hardly be over-emphasized. It is essential for the individual to reach his own conclusions from the pattern of discussions and not to be influenced by the personal ideas of one who, after all, has some hold over him. In no other subject is the educational theory of "bringing out" or "encouraging self-expression" so necessary.'^{9, 10}

We are also told that this school has not succeeded in integrating the work in civics with that in other subjects. Such integration is always difficult if the work of the school is organized into subjects, each with its own

strictly defined syllabus, as it is in most grammar schools. This is why some schools, especially primary schools in the villages, now make their timetables less rigid and their syllabuses more flexible, and use the project method as a means of educating their children for community life.

In all this the underlying purpose is to make the children knowledgeable about their community and interested in its problems, but in many cases the school may also try to relate some of its teaching directly to these problems in order to help the children to see how they might be solved. For instance, it may teach them about new crops or better ways of growing existing crops; new crafts or ways of improving existing crafts; ideas for improving the home, caring for babies, cooking and preserving food, and safeguarding health.

This is an exceedingly important field of community education, and statements of policy in many countries have stressed it as a main function, if not *the* main function, of the rural school. However, it is one thing to state a policy for the schools, but quite another to carry it out. Many difficulties stand in the way, and nothing is gained by ignoring them.

In the first place it is not always realized how much interest, effort, knowledge, and skill this policy demands of the village teacher. It implies that he knows a good deal about local conditions, has sound ideas for improving them, and possesses the practical skill to put them into effect. Unless he is carefully trained for this kind of work he is unlikely to be able to do it well.

There may also be difficulties with parents who value the school primarily as a means of getting their child into 'a white-collar job', and who therefore resent time being 'wasted' on practical work. 'In our last ten-year

plan', writes an education officer in Tanganyika, 'we laid great stress on school gardens. The four-year primary school course included an agricultural syllabus, graded to suit each class. . . . But our schools are often criticized by parents because when the boys leave them they are not equipped to earn their living in the towns, and are spoilt for work on the farm. Boys who reach Standard IV at the age of fourteen or fifteen are actively resentful at the idea of spending their life on the farm, and want to go away to the town; those who leave after one or two years in school may be content with farm life, but they have got out of the routine of going every day to the fields and learning in the practical way, first with a small hoe and then with a bigger. *Their agricultural education has been broken by what the school has given them.*'¹¹ (My italics.)

One feels sorry for the parents whose children the schools were failing to educate successfully either for the country or the town, and not altogether surprised to read that 'There are still very many places which need a school and are big enough to support one, but nowadays there does not always seem to be much spontaneous demand; we have to suggest and persuade more than we did formerly, and go round trying to stimulate a demand for schools. Very often, too, even the old schools show a sudden and most disappointing fall in enrolment and attendance.'¹²

If some parents object to practical work in the village schools, others like it even less in the middle and secondary schools. One comment on a proposal that the curriculum of schools in East Africa should lay heavy stress on the practice and theory of agriculture and building was that 'African schoolchildren have plenty of exercise in cleaning the school and washing their

own clothes. This extra drudgery would be too much for them. . . . The people of England would not allow their schools to concentrate on the coal or textile industries in the way that these paragraphs of the Binns report propose that African schools should concentrate on agriculture.'¹³

These are real difficulties, but they are not necessarily insuperable, at any rate in the primary schools. Part of the trouble may be avoided by designing different educational policies for areas at different stages of development. Thus it has been suggested that there is a case in Kenya 'for parallel educational policies within the same system, closely related to the actual people and needs of given districts. In advanced areas, broadly speaking, a bias towards agricultural production on a large scale, towards trade and the basic training in the three Rs. In the more backward areas, a bias towards simple agriculture, pasture and cattle management, homecraft, manual skills, simple arithmetic, and vernacular reading. It should be fairly easy to guide present primary schooling into these channels, and to devise ways of transferring unusually bright children from the backward schools to the more advanced stream before Standard III.'¹⁴

While this may help, my own Nigerian experience suggests that many of the parents' objections quickly disappear if the teachers take them into their confidence, convince them (by results!) that practical work on projects need not interfere with the efficient teaching of the three Rs, and get them to send their children to school young enough to complete the first four basic years by the age of eleven or twelve. This last point is especially important. Boys who leave school at this age are only just old enough to be really useful

to their parents on the farm and, unlike the boys of fourteen or fifteen, they are still too young to go off to the town. Thus there is a much better chance that they will settle down to village life, and even apply some of the ideas they have learnt in school.

Parents are also much more likely to support the school putting more stress on projects and practical work if the teachers seek their help and advice when they are being planned. After all, it is not unreasonable for the teacher to discuss with the parents the kinds of craft they think their children could most usefully learn, the crops that would grow best in the school garden, and what aspects of homecraft they would most like the girls to learn. Such discussions help to develop a working co-operation between the parents and the school which can have many good effects, not least in getting the parents thinking about what they themselves might do. This is a point which will be discussed again in Chapter VII.

Wherever the school is traditionally valued primarily as a place for learning 'book', the teacher may also find the children unwilling to do manual work because they consider it beneath their dignity. Here, of course, the teacher's own attitude and example count for a great deal, but it is also very important that he should try to associate the work with some incentive which the *children* value enough to work for. In one emirate in Northern Nigeria such an incentive was provided by the school breakfast. Most children normally had only one good meal a day, and most of them came to school without having eaten since the previous night. There were two hours daily set aside for practical work in the cool of the morning. During this time some of the boys worked in the school garden while others, together

with some of the girls, worked at such crafts as embroidery, weaving, and leatherwork. Meanwhile, the remaining girls cooked a simple breakfast. The quantity and tastiness of this breakfast very largely depended on what was available from the garden, and on what additional garnishes could be bought^o with money made by selling the products of the crafts in the market. All the work had a purpose, and this was why the children enjoyed it and learnt to do it to a high standard.

The same problem of making field work meaningful and attractive was encountered at Bakht er Ruda in the Sudan. 'Given a good teacher in charge, boys could be jollied into an enthusiasm, but we preferred not to be so dependent on personalities. We found a solution in a Young Farmers' Club of a particular kind—a sort of farming co-operative, with the profits going into the boys' own pockets.'¹⁵

However, it is not always quite so difficult to get parents and children to support a practically orientated curriculum. In some areas the people are still interested in developing their own rural life and do not want their children to migrate into the towns. In these areas, always provided that what the school teaches really does meet local needs, *in practice* as well as in intention, the people will welcome it.

The Rural Education Centre in the Vunamami Village Council area in New Britain aims at being a school of this kind. It is an experimental school intended for boys who have already spent four years in their village schools, and the whole of the work is centred around agricultural activities, the boys spending roughly half their school time out of doors. The school 'is now totally self-supporting as regards food and the normal diet of the region has been supplemented with

poultry, peanuts, rice, beans, and sorghum'. The school has introduced improved types of taro, sweet potato, tapioca, and bananas, and experimented with improved kinds of cash-crops, chickens, and pigs.¹⁶

'The academic syllabus attempts to base class work on the school's outdoor activities. It is not a rigid syllabus, but a flexible list of suggestions to be modified as the outdoor activities change. The syllabus is divided into two parts: a core syllabus and a supplementary syllabus. The core syllabus aims at integrating the relevant parts of the English, Arithmetic, and Social Studies courses on the basis of current outdoor activities. The supplementary syllabus includes topics necessary to Standard V work which could not legitimately be related to outdoor activities.' The social studies syllabus is intended 'to give greater significance to school activities by studying the past history and future prospects of crops and methods used, and comparing and contrasting methods and results at Vunamami with methods and results in other parts of the world'.¹⁷

We are told that the academic standards in this school are higher than those in other schools and that: 'The people of the area through the Council are right behind this school, partly because education has been at a very low level before its establishment, but mainly I believe because it is a school which fits into the rural environment of the people and the adults themselves are benefiting by the rural projects worked out.'¹⁸ Presumably this means that the school is also succeeding in teaching or influencing adults. It is a pity we are not told how.

The staff of this school would seem to have succeeded in their aim of devising an integrated curriculum practically orientated to local agriculture and acceptable to

local people, but it must be remembered that they were working in very favourable conditions. The key members of the staff were keen, well-qualified, hand-picked for the job, and given a free hand. The local leaders supported them and gave them adequate funds.

So far we have dealt only with curriculum, but many people feel that teaching method is as important as the curriculum in preparing children for community life. The good community, they say, is a democratic community in which everyone is free to 'participate fully and on terms of equal status in projects of joint concern to him and to his associates'.¹⁹ Many communities fall far short of this ideal and it is the job of the community development worker—and of the schoolteacher—to help them approach nearer to it.

The community worker tries to do this by getting people to come together to discuss their problems and decide to do something about them. This is easiest where people have inherited a democratic tradition which allows everyone to have his say, and hardest where they have been accustomed to expect all major decisions to be taken by someone in authority. It is here, so some people argue, that the school can help. People cannot really enjoy freedom until they have learnt also to accept the responsibilities of freedom, and the more freedom and responsibility children can be given in school, the more likely they are to develop and maintain a free and satisfying community life when they grow up.

There is a vast outpouring of books about the development of character, leadership, and citizenship in school, and perhaps this sometimes leads us to assume a little too easily that the school does in fact prepare its students for life in a free and democratic society. For

this purpose it is not enough that the school should include social studies and civics in its curriculum. 'Children', writes Furnivall, 'may learn to pass examinations from textbooks, but they learn to live from example and experience, and where textbooks teach one thing and the environment another, it is the latter that prevails.'²⁰ Equally with other things, the conditions of freedom and the practice of democracy must be learnt by example and experience, and pupils will be influenced far more by the kind of human relationships they experience in school than by the content of the curriculum. This is where the schools may fail. Writing about schools in Great Britain, Ben Morris suggests that the typical school has 'the structure and characteristics of an authoritarian rather than a democratic society'; that the word of the headmaster is law; that the assistant teachers have little or no freedom to take an active share in planning the life of the school; and that pupils are judged by their willingness to do what they are told. He also criticizes teachers for using competition and rivalry, rather than co-operation, as the main incentives in the classroom, and for relying too much on marks and examinations. 'The democratically organized school which gives personal relations equality with knowledge is a rarity.'²¹

These are sweeping criticisms, but there is more than a grain of truth in them in respect of many schools in the tropics, as well as some at least of the British schools. While most of us would reject any idea of 'letting the children run the school' it may well be that many school administrators and teachers could safely and profitably give children rather more freedom and responsibility for the planning and ordering of school affairs, and even of the work they do in class,

There are many ways of doing this. One way is for the teacher to organize some of his classroom work in 'project' form, discussing each project with the children and planning with them how the class can carry it out. Usually the class will organize itself into groups, each group undertaking to carry out part of the work.

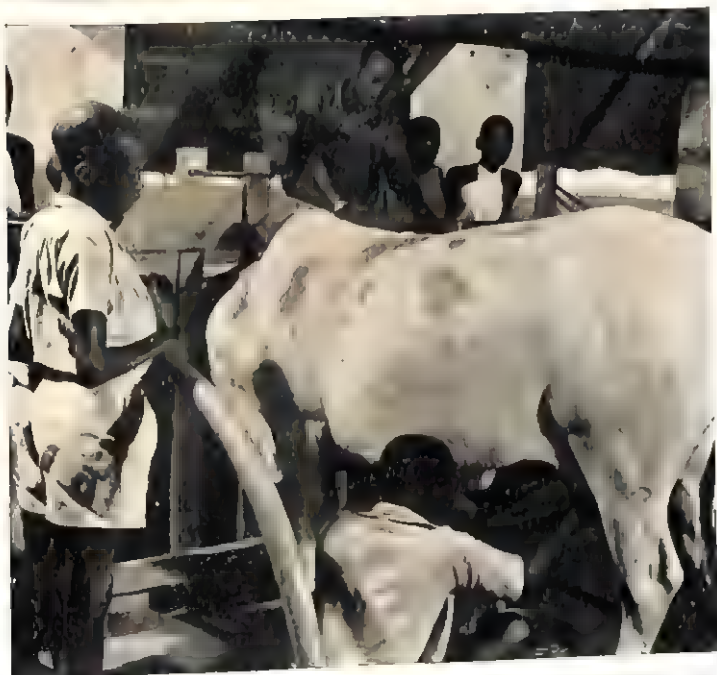
This project method is particularly appropriate to the kind of community study and practical work described in the earlier part of this chapter. Each project provides the children with a meaningful, short-term purpose suitable to their age, and, by giving the groups freedom to plan and direct their own activities, the teacher brings the children into a co-operative working relationship with one another. They learn to depend rather more on each other and rather less on the teacher, and they develop their own self-imposed group discipline. In this kind of situation the teacher acts more as an adviser and co-ordinator of group activities than as a class instructor.²²

Most educationists are now agreed that project work allied to group-activity methods is a good way of dealing with certain parts of the curriculum, and we have already noted that it can have a special value in preparing children for adult community life. But it has its limitations. Projects are time-consuming and they do not always fit in well with examination requirements. Even the highly integrated and community-based curriculum at Vunamami had its supplementary syllabus.

These disadvantages do not apply to school societies which meet out of school hours. Such societies provide a focus for a good deal of useful learning which cannot easily be fitted into the day-to-day work of the classroom, and with the advantage of a much freer atmosphere. Young Farmers' Clubs, Young Stockbreeders'

Clubs, 4-H Clubs, and junior co-operatives, for example, not only stimulate children to useful extra-curricular study, but teach them how to organize and conduct their own affairs. The Young Farmers' Club at Bakht er Ruda in the Sudan was originally started to stimulate the interest of the boys in agriculture, but it was soon realized that it was even more valuable on its organizational side. 'For instance, boys debated realistically because they were tied to finance—a very welcome contrast to the lack of realism in debating societies. They had to make decisions without delay because the seasons would not wait. They had ample opportunity for learning the practical work of budget-presentation and keeping of accounts, because income and expenditure were the responsibility of the society, and did not form part of the general revenue and expenditure of the school. They had to keep minutes, look after stores, conduct correspondence—and learn to manage their fellow members. Surprisingly often, the same problems that occur in adult communities, local government and national government occurred in miniature in our society. . . . On one occasion four days after the executive committee had all been thrown out, the members re-elected all but one of them again. The reason was that an older boy had gone round pointing out that a pay-out was due, the holidays began next week, and how could a completely raw committee manage this in the time available?'²³

School societies, which teach students to take real responsibility for the consequences of their own decisions, obviously help to prepare them realistically for adult community life, always provided they feel that the issues they decide really do matter. The Bakht er Ruda Young Farmers' Club educated its members



III. RELATING SCHOOLTEACHING TO COMMUNITY LIFE

Above: India. How to get rid of malaria.

Below: East Africa. Learning how to milk a cow.



IV. RELATING SCHOOLTEACHING TO COMMUNITY LIFE

Above: Mexico. Learning how to plant trees.

Below: Mexico. Teaching schoolgirls to value cleanliness.

because they controlled money and because they felt that money was important, and much the same was true of the school co-operatives in Brazil. The greatest satisfaction that students got from these societies 'was for them to find themselves treated as adults and no longer as children. When they have reached the stage where they are considered sufficiently adult to collect resources, they should also be sufficiently reasonable and mature to be able to spend such resources and to manage them. The greatest pleasure which they derived was through the recognition of this right.'²⁴

These co-operatives are organized mainly in the primary schools to provide the children with opportunities to learn by doing all kinds of practical work in school and community and to teach them the fundamental principles of democracy 'through free discussions in general assemblies and committees on by-laws, co-operative programme and policy, income and expenses, and through the vote and elections'.²⁵ It is admitted that at first there were many failures, especially where the authorities tried to force the teachers to organize the societies. But it is claimed that the movement is now gaining ground, partly because of the efforts made to interest the teachers in the elementary schools, and partly because of the help they are now given by the officers of the rural extension service.

Some school headmasters have tried to extend yet further the field of responsibility open to their students by organizing students' councils and handing over to them some of the powers they would normally exercise themselves. For instance, a council of this kind was formed at King's College, Lagos, in December, 1952.²⁶

This students' council originally had thirty-one

elected members, two from each form and one from every society which had functioned satisfactorily for a full school year. It could make by-laws subject to the Principal's assent, and advise the Principal and staff on all matters affecting students. It also had a wide range of executive powers which it exercised through committees, of which the Sanitation, Food, Social Services, and Discipline Committees were the most active and important.

This council quickly made its presence felt. Among the motions it discussed during the first term there was one which queried the Principal's recent ruling about the wearing of the school uniform, and this motion received unanimous support. In due course, and after certain points had been clarified in subsequent discussion, this was accepted by the Principal. Other motions discussed during the session included one appealing to all councillors serving on two or more committees to step down for others serving on none, and another asking the college authorities to change the date of the Founders' Day celebrations so that they would no longer be held only during the school holidays as heretofore.

The committees were also very active. The Sanitation Committee persuaded the College authorities to employ a man to clean the bathing-rooms and latrines; organized student volunteers to clean up the college premises; and approached the Town Council to prevent bill-stickers posting notices on the College walls. The Food Committee got the food-sellers to improve the food they brought to sell to students during the mid-morning break. The Social Services Committee organized fire-prevention parades and film shows, and provided a small reading-room. But the Discipline

Committee soon ran into trouble when it became necessary to 'discipline' the head of the Social Services Committee, and this led to the constitution being revised. The old Disciplinary Committee was dissolved. A new, strong, central executive committee consisting of the heads of all the other committees took its place and was given wide but clearly defined powers.

The ideas described in this chapter nearly all make heavy demands on teachers, but many teachers feel that the extra effort needed is well worthwhile because they believe that they can best help maintain and extend freedom in adult society by giving children practical experience of the difficulties and responsibilities of freedom in school. They feel with A. G. Hughes that 'The three aspects of school life . . . (curriculum, out-of-school activities and human relations) cannot in practice be kept apart. As we get human relations right, as the social climate of our schools becomes more democratic, the whole life of the school will be transformed: discipline will be increasingly self-discipline, the curriculum will be more socially relevant, learning by experience will replace much class teaching, extra-curricular activities will be developed on a self-governing basis.'²⁷ The larger the school community, the more necessary it is to underpin it with small communities formed for various purposes and with varying membership.

VI

HOME AND COMMUNITY PROJECTS

THE assumption underlying all the work described in the last chapter is that the children will be influenced by what they have learnt in school after they have grown up, and that new ideas and knowledge will gradually spread throughout the whole community as the result of their example.

Many people question this assumption. They point out that most children only attend school for a few years, that even while attending school they mostly live at home, and that where the teaching of school and home conflict the latter is likely to prevail. In order to have a real and lasting influence on the children, they say, the school must also influence their parents.

Teachers may have a second reason for trying to educate the parents. If they educate only the children, they must wait a long time to see results, but by influencing adults they can have an *immediate* effect on community life. It is in this way, more than in any other, that the teacher and the school can help in current community development work.

One approach is to try to do this through the children by getting them to undertake a series of 'home projects', graduated in difficulty and suited to their age and skill. Thus a project may involve looking after rabbits or chickens; making or repairing a pig pen to prevent pigs from straying; making a latrine and maintaining it in a sanitary condition; constructing simple

pieces of furniture for the home; making and using a mosquito net; growing new kinds of vegetables; or cultivating improved varieties of crops on a patch of the family land.

In every project he tackles, the child is expected to apply the lessons he has learnt in school. If he takes his projects seriously, enjoys them, and does them well, he consolidates what he has learnt and at the same time demonstrates it to his parents in the home. In this way the home project makes every child a home teacher.

If the home project were really as simple as this it would solve many problems, but, of course, it is not quite so simple. It is easy for the teacher to allocate projects to the children, but how can he get them to carry them out? He has far less authority in the home than in the school.

When a Unesco consultant introduced the home project idea into schools at Viani in Colombia, South America, she tried to solve this problem by asking the teachers regularly to visit the children's homes in order to check up on how the projects were being carried out.¹ We are told that the teachers 'got highly interested in the work', but we are also told that they soon found that regular home visiting took up a great deal of their free time after school hours. Many children lived a long way from the school and some lived in the mountains, so that visits tended to be tiring as well as time-consuming. The teachers complained that there was not enough time for visits between the close of school and the coming of darkness, and one cannot but wonder whether they managed to keep them up when their first enthusiasm had cooled.

At Viani, the whole weight of responsibility for seeing that the children carried out their home projects

was thrown on the teachers. They found it a heavy burden, and it is obviously desirable to find some way of easing it. It is for this reason that in some other parts of South America, notably in Guatemala² and Bolivia,³ the school home project work is based on children's clubs. In these clubs the children select their own home projects and they carry them out as *club members*: and the desire to do well in the club makes them keen to do their best. Of course, the teacher still carries a good deal of responsibility, but in the club he is helping and advising the children, not directing and controlling them. Although at first he still has to supervise the projects, 'as time goes on, outstanding children, either still in school or recent graduates of the school, are trained as leaders, so that they can assume an increasing proportion of the responsibility for the supervision of the individual projects in the various homes'.⁴ At first these clubs were organized only for the boys, so that 'while ground was being gained among past and present boy pupils of the school, the girls of the community were neglected or forgotten. On their behalf one of the *nucleos* had the happy idea of organizing house-keepers' clubs (*Clubes de Amas de Casa*) which, with the passing years, have become the principal school for the training and advancement of countrywomen.'⁵

In some other parts of the tropics schools have introduced the home project idea into their Young Farmers' Clubs. This is the policy, for instance, of the Sudan United Mission's rural training centre at Gindiri in the Northern Region of Nigeria, where the centre has established a Young Farmers' Club for its teachers-in-training mainly in order to teach them how to run Young Farmers' Clubs in their own district schools. 'In the Young Farmers' Clubs that are starting up in the

primary schools this is one thing we are emphasizing; each member should have a small plot of land—just a few square yards is sufficient—at his home if this is practicable, where he can put into practice what he has learnt at school and in the Club. This small plot forms the basis of competition work and, incidentally, can be an example to parents. Some of the plots will, we hope, be visited by the Club on Saturday afternoons and so help to bring the Club into the life of the home.⁶

The reference to competitions in the last quotation suggests another useful way of strengthening the incentives provided by the clubs. Competitions can be organized both between the members of a single club, and on a district basis between clubs. The organization of district competitions in Fiji has been well described in a recent article in the *Community Development Bulletin*,⁷ and there is a useful short note on a district competition in *Fundamental and Adult Education*.⁸

The home project serves a twofold purpose because it shows both child and parent how the teaching of the school applies at home. But children and parents do not live all their lives inside the home. They live in a community, and in the community are many homes which have no child in school. The teacher may wish to reach them too, and it is for this reason that teachers in some parts of the tropics supplement the home project with the *community project*. Projects of this kind have a more specific educational purpose than the community service projects already described in Chapter IV. Like home projects, they aim to get the children to apply what they learn in school to their lives outside the school and in doing so to teach the adults too.

The community project is undertaken by a group of schoolchildren led by their teacher, and it is aimed

at the community rather than the children's homes. The school takes the initiative and tackles the work, hoping thereby to arouse the interest of the adults, win their co-operation, and teach them how to do it for themselves. A great deal of this kind of work has been done by schools in the Philippines, and some of it has been well described by Pedro Orata. 'The only way to start', he says, 'is to start, and the place to start is right here with what little we have . . . we did not wait for experts to come, or for money to be appropriated, or for certain things to be done. Had we waited, we would still be waiting. . . . There need be no fear so long as one is rendering useful service, and we saw nothing trite or dangerous in causing water to flow over stagnant pools, irrigating a dry farm, building a road, making fishponds to take the place of open toilets, giving students a chance to earn their tuition fees, constructing sanitary latrines, blind drainage, compost pits, and pig pens, or even catching stray animals and later helping the owners to build corrals for them. There has been no adverse criticism of any kind that has come to my attention directly or indirectly.'⁹

Many of the projects Orata mentions could have been undertaken simply as community service projects, but he stresses that they were carefully designed to educate as well. One example he gives dealt with 'the menace of self-supporting pigs'. Here the problem was that although there was a government ordinance forbidding people to allow their pigs and goats to stray, the authorities were too afraid of public opinion to enforce it.

Orata states that the school tackled this problem by getting the mayor of the village to appoint the senior boys as official 'catchers of stray animals', and asking all

the pupils to report stray animals so that they could be caught. When an owner came to claim his animal, he was told about the ordinance and asked why his animal was loose. If it appeared that he had no proper pen and could not make one for himself the pupils, together with any adults who were willing to help, provided him with one. 'So far', writes Orata, 'there has been no second offence, and the response has been most successful. Parents no longer resist the operation of the ordinance because their own children enforce it, and they are themselves assisted in keeping their animals in suitable pig pens, the making of which has in some cases been made the concern of the whole community.'¹⁰

We are told that this project was also supported by a good deal of teaching both in and out of school. The pupils were taken to see actual examples of the damage done by stray animals and asked to calculate it in terms of money. Both they and the animal owners had their attention drawn to the fertilizing value of the animal waste collected in the pens.

Not all the projects were of this kind, and one very interesting development which Orata records is the project intended to provide the student with 'gainful work experience'—that is, with opportunities of earning money. This scheme started at the Urdaneta High School with the idea of making the vocational courses more practical and interesting for the boys and at the same time educative and helpful to the community.

What the school did was to invite local people to avail themselves of the services of its senior students to build them sanitary latrines, blind drainage (*pagbabasaan*), compost pits, and pig pens, the people paying the cost of the materials, and for the students' labour at a small hourly rate. 'What surprised us most', says

Orata, 'was that, while at first the employment was limited to the students (boys) who had not paid all their tuition fees, it is turning out that many students who are not in debt and who have ample means are asking for the privilege to work to earn. The parents of the students are enthusiastic about the idea, as are homeowners, who now say that the reason for their inability to provide themselves with latrines, *pagbabasaan*, compost pits, and pig pens was that there had been no competent labourers or workers to hire, and they frankly admitted that they did not know how to go about looking for persons who could do the job for them. . . . As a form of community service, this has few equals in the vast majority of towns and villages.'¹¹

Orata stresses that this is a most practical *educational* approach—for the community as well as for the boys. 'Heretofore, the only approach to the problem of hygiene and sanitation has been through ordinances and community lectures. The head of the sanitary division of Urdaneta has been here twenty-six years, and he has long given up in despair. We found the district and the villages filthy—they still are—but at last sanitary latrines are being constructed, stagnant pools being drained or swept away by flowing water, and drainage systems under the kitchens being installed.'¹²

It is true that school community projects can sometimes make a useful contribution to community development, and that the keen teacher should not be discouraged from starting by lack of material resources. As Orata says, 'The only way to start is to start'. But however small their resources, the teachers in the Philippines had at least one thing in their favour, for the people already highly respected them and were accustomed to look to them for leadership in local

affairs. This was a factor which contributed very greatly to their success.

Orata stresses that the projects were educational, as indeed they were, but it is worth noting that the education they provided was of a very practical and limited kind. The people, in fact, had already been educated to *know* that it was wrong to let animals stray, and unhealthy not to use sanitary latrines, but they had done nothing about it because it required of them more effort than they were willing to give. What the school projects did was to show people easy, practicable, and even profitable ways of applying the basic knowledge they already had, but they were much less useful as a means of teaching completely new ideas, such as composting animal waste for spreading on the fields. As Orata says: 'This is yet a new idea which may take time to penetrate the minds of the people, but it has positive possibilities which cannot be gainsaid. *If and when* [my italics] the people begin to appreciate the value of waste products for their own vegetables and fruit trees, they will naturally want to keep their own animals at home so that they can put their waste to the compost pit in the backyard.'¹³

Getting adults to accept and apply such new ideas is an important part of community development work, but it is not easy, and for this, even more than for the community project, the teacher needs to be liked and trusted by the people and to have their support. Ways of winning such support will be discussed in the next chapter.

VII

DIRECT APPROACHES TO ADULTS

IN the last three chapters we have seen the teacher always working with or through the children, even when, as in the last chapter, he is trying to influence the adults as well. But many teachers go much further than this. They make direct contacts with individuals and community groups either to educate them or to influence their attitude to the community or the school.

Some of the school superintendents in the Philippines have worked along these lines by encouraging the teachers to organize neighbourhood groups for education and project work. These neighbourhood groups or *puroks* are modern versions of the ancient form of grouping called *barangay* which the people had formerly organized for mutual help and protection. Each *purok* is assisted by a teacher, but the *purok* is intended to be self-governing and to choose its own leaders. 'Such organization places the responsibility and authority for neighbourhood improvement squarely on the shoulders of the neighbourhood folk. The teachers remain in the background. They stimulate activity but must not be misunderstood as meddlers. They advise without being officious.'¹

The *purok* brings people together to discuss what they can do to meet their needs and improve their homes and neighbourhood, and to attend classes and demonstrations arranged by the teachers or by health or agricultural personnel. 'As an organization, it is

becoming a vehicle through which the educative process is worked out with the adult simultaneously with the execution of projects.²

In spite of this reference to education, one gets the impression that the teacher's main job in the *purok* is to stimulate projects rather than to teach, and therefore it is not surprising that after a time some teachers have found themselves running out of ideas of what they might get the people to do next. They have faced the prospect that the *puroks* might become 'inactive, even backsliding', and they have realized that it is not enough merely to stimulate people *to* action. It is often equally important to educate them *for* action.

There is another reason for not putting too great a stress on projects. It is often deceptively easy to stimulate people into undertaking the first few projects to get the things they already badly want, but it is unrealistic to expect them to go on indefinitely from one project to another. Sooner or later, often sooner, they will get tired and want a rest, at any rate for a time, and the teacher who tries to force the pace is likely to defeat his own ends and turn the people against himself.

A three-year Food for Family Fitness (3-F) campaign started by the head teacher of a village school at La Plaine in Dominica in the West Indies seems to have struck a good balance between education and project work.³ Inspired by a social welfare training course he had attended in Jamaica in 1947, this teacher formed a local action committee to promote the growing of green vegetables, the rearing of poultry, and the improvement of the people's homes. The members of this committee met weekly to study literature on vegetable gardening, poultry-rearing and home improvement, and they practised and demonstrated what they

learnt in their own homes and gardens. They appealed to their neighbours to follow their example, pointing out that this was the best way of improving their children's health and their chances of doing well at school. They made house-to-house visits, held meetings in the streets and organized training days for cookery and gardening demonstrations. In addition to their work for the Food for Family Fitness campaign, they also stimulated the formation of a village choir and an adult education class.

Both in the *purok* of the Philippines and in the 3-F action committee of La Plaine we see the teacher organizing and stimulating general community groups, but in some countries teachers have also been responsible for organizing groups specially for farmers, or for housewives, or for young people. For instance, in some Latin American countries, such as Bolivia, the teachers organize mothers' clubs, in which the women learn knitting, sewing, cooking, how to install and use a smokeless stove and, sometimes, how to read and write.⁴

All these groups have been specially created by the teacher or the school, but it is not always necessary for the teacher to create new groups. In some communities there are already groups of many kinds quite unconnected with the school, and they provide a fruitful field for the teacher's community work. To the extent that he is better educated than his neighbours, anxious to help them, and unassuming in his manner, he will find many things that he can do. He can provide a room for meetings at the school; help with accounts; suggest new activities; and put groups in touch with outside help when it is needed. In some tropical territories, such as the West Indies, the best of the rural

teachers make their biggest contribution to *community* development by the work they do as *members of co-*operatives, agricultural societies, church groups, and other kinds of voluntary organizations.

This kind of work is most valuable when the teacher refuses to take office and really does keep himself in the background, though always ready with help when it is wanted. Such a teacher does not 'run' groups, but helps to train group leaders, and when he leaves to take another post, he leaves his neighbours better able to manage their affairs than when he came.

This is a most useful kind of community work, because it can have a lasting good effect. By running groups, on the other hand, the teacher can easily do more harm than good. By assuming leadership, he deprives his neighbours of their chances of learning how to lead, and when he goes at last he leaves no one qualified to take his place. I can well remember a few years ago taking a party of teachers to visit a village schoolmaster who had become well known for his enthusiasm for community work, and who was secretary or treasurer to six or seven local societies. We found that he was about to leave on promotion to a larger school, and someone asked him how 'his societies' would get on after he had gone. He replied that he thought they would find it very difficult to carry on, since his successor was not interested in community work and the village had no experienced leaders of its own. It had obviously never occurred to him that this was a problem he had himself helped to create.

Membership of community groups can also help the teacher to break down the barriers that sometimes exist between the school and the community. It is a way of meeting people on equal terms and of getting

to know them as a friend as well as the teacher of their children; and to the extent that the people come to look on him as a good neighbour who is always willing to help them, so he and his school become more effective centres of community work.

The teacher in the Philippines who bicycled to the headquarters of the Rural Health Unit to get immediate help for sick people in his village obviously realized this,⁵ and so did the teachers in the Nambe school in New Mexico.⁶ The account of this school constantly stresses the importance of the neighbourliness and friendliness which were developed through the daily contacts between teachers and parents. 'The school buildings became the centre for community functions, but they came to mean more than mere community meeting-places. As the years passed and the pattern of co-operation continued to deepen, the school was recognized as the place where assistance and help were available. The men came to the school for help in writing letters of application, the women came to the school to sew, to bring their babies to the clinic, to ask for recipes and slips from the school plants. As the people realized that the school would and could help them secure the aid they often needed from the clinics and the welfare departments, they came to ask advice about the agencies, to secure information in regard to . . . employment. Through the school's use of agencies, the people became aware of them, and the constant effort of the staff to contact agencies and bring them into the school programme was strengthened as the years went by.'

Underlying all this teacher activity in stimulating, organizing, teaching, guiding, and helping the community's adults is the assumption that it is the teacher's

job to serve the people, and that by education and training he is well qualified to do so. However true that may be, and it is by no means always true, it is equally true that while the teacher may have much to give, there is also much that the people have to give the teacher. This is a point that needs much stressing, for it is often overlooked. The best kind of teacher-people relationship is one which enables them to find common purposes and pursue them together, both teacher and people helping, advising, and guiding each other in relation to each common purpose. In such a relationship both teacher and people give and take from one another, both respect and help one another, and neither sees the other as superior or inferior.

Most teachers are too conscious of their superior education and training and of their professional job as teachers really to deal with other adults as equals in matters concerned with education, and they are particularly reluctant to give them a real say in the control of school affairs. The teacher, they feel, is much the most competent person to decide what should be done, and they see little value in discussing school policy with the parents. Sensible people will realize that the teacher knows best, and therefore support his decisions. People who disagree are foolish and it is a waste of time to argue with them.

On the whole parents in most places are quite willing to accept the teacher's control over the school. They have learnt to value the formal education it provides as a means of giving their children a good start in life, and just because most of what the school teaches is bookish and not very well related to the ordinary affairs of daily life, they feel that the teacher is the best judge of what should be done and how it should

be done, always provided that the children do at least as well in examinations as children from other schools. If they do badly, parents will blame the teacher because he is inefficient, but they will still not think of contesting his right to control the school's affairs.

In schools of this kind parents are most likely to resent the teacher's control in matters of detail unconnected with the major purpose of the school. For instance, parents may resent the teacher arbitrarily deciding on a change in the school uniform which involves them in additional expense. Even so, if they value the teaching of the school, they will usually put up with decisions of this kind with only minor grumbles. The teacher normally only gets into serious difficulties with parents when he makes decisions which conflict with the parents' ideas of what the school should do. This is the cause of most of the difficulties that beset the teacher who tries to create a community-centred school.

Difficulties arise for two reasons. We have already seen that most people value the formal curriculum of the school as a means of getting their children into good wage-earning or salaried jobs. The demand for these jobs is normally much greater than the supply, and only the child who does well in examinations has a good chance of getting one. Therefore anything the teacher does that seems to prejudice the children's chances of success is likely to be strongly resented by their parents. When the teacher introduces community studies, projects, and other kinds of practical work, every parent can see that these take up a great deal of time—time which they feel would be much better spent in giving their children a more thorough grounding in the 'school subjects'.

The second reason is that education geared to community life usually lacks the prestige which parents give to formal education. In most rural areas in the tropics parents feel themselves quite capable of educating their children for life in their own community if that were all they wanted for them. In fact, many*of them feel that they can do this much better than the teacher, and they are far more likely to question the teacher's competence and authority in this kind of education than in the formal education which they regard as his proper sphere.

If, therefore, the teacher introduces changes into the school curriculum in order to make it more 'community-centred', or busies the children with home or community projects without first consulting their parents, he is quite likely to find that he has run into trouble, and that, instead of making his school a centre of community education, all he has done is to arouse resentment and focus it on himself. The bitterness of the feeling that can so easily be aroused comes out very clearly in a letter written to the school authorities by a parent in the Philippines. 'May I have the honour', he wrote, 'of asking your office the extent of the so-called "community-centred school"? . . . The detrimental effect of it on the children who are made to labour during school hours makes us jittery. It seems that the idea behind the community-centred schools is being over-emphasized. . . . I have heard even that there is a plan afoot (of the school authorities, I mean) to go around town to clean the streets. An admirable and laudable act indeed! and favourable to *laissez-faire* municipal administration.'

In another part of the Philippines parents reacted in much the same way to a school project to transform a

swamp into fishponds. The parents complained that the children were much too young to undertake the work. 'Digging is a man's job', they said. 'Spare the children from the forced labour that the project will require. They ought not to spoil their clothes by being obliged to work in muddy places. Besides, why should they waste their precious study time that is not even enough to enable them to learn to read and write? Leave the swamp alone.'⁸

When such feelings exist, it is folly to ignore them, for then however hard the teachers (and the children!) work, nothing they do will have any good or permanent effect. At Calinog in the Philippines, 'early in the morning and late in the afternoon, teachers and pupils hoed grass, filled low places, swept and burned rubbish everywhere in the town'. They levelled the town plaza, planted ornamental shrubs, and caught stray animals. In fact, the teachers tired themselves out in service to the community, but the only result was ill-feeling. The parents complained that their children were being used as street-cleaners, and feeling ran so high that 'the principal and some of the teachers were threatened to be manhandled and accused in court'. Moreover, during the school holidays everything they had cleaned went back to its former state. 'The grass had grown tall on the plaza, on the sides of the streets, on home surroundings, and on the school premises. Rubbish reappeared on the streets and everywhere throughout the town. In garbage cans crawling things were again enjoying their feast.'⁹

The moral to be drawn from all this is, that the teacher should not set the children to work on community projects without their parents' support, and he is more likely to get it in remote and 'backward' places

than in developed areas where people have already learnt to value schooling of the traditional formal kind.

It is more easily given in remote and backward places because the people there are still following their traditional way of life and are not yet seeking to leave it for the town. Therefore, formal schooling is 'not of much use to them, and they will support a community-centred school once they are sure that it can help them in their daily lives.

In Latin America many community schools have been successfully established in isolated Amerindian communities of this kind. The teachers in these schools have been carefully trained to work as practical teachers of agriculture, health and home improvement with adults as well as children. 'The rural teacher must be a sanitarian, an agriculturist, a handy man with tools, must understand the nutritive value of local foodstuffs and be acquainted with local resources, and must have a good bit of the social service worker about him.'¹⁰

The teachers do most of their work with adults by forming clubs to promote co-operation between school and community. The teachers provide the clubs with informal classes, for the men in agriculture, and for the women in sewing, cooking, and handicrafts. The teachers also help people in many other ways: lending tools for home improvement and themselves helping to build houses; and providing seeds, vegetable plants, and seedling trees for improved cultivation. In return the people help the school. For example, at one school, we are told, 'the campesinos gave the central school the irrigation waters of the south zone, and dug the ditches to the door of the school. They also dug a well for the installation of a pump. One day, one hundred

campesinos with crude tools and fifty with their burros broke the ground of a pasture in order that the school might use it for potatoes, barley, lima beans, and other vegetables.^{'11}

Help of this kind becomes more regular and effective when it is properly organized, and in Latin America the school authorities attach much importance to the formation of a local association of adults to support the school. Thus in Guatemala the chief function of the *Patronato Escolar*, as it is called, is to provide effective community assistance to the school. 'This organization has the responsibility for providing help in the construction and improvement of school buildings, help in the organization of the hot lunch programme, assistance in the provision of paint, whitewash and other materials for the improvement of the classrooms, kitchens, and shops which every school must eventually have, assistance in the provision of both irrigation and drinking water for the school, and other community responsibilities related to the school facilities. . . . It has been found that a functional school can generate unsuspected energies in a rural community to a degree that has surprised the teachers themselves. The organization of the *Patronato Escolar* can channel these energies and make them a lasting characteristic of the rural community.'¹²

The corresponding organization in Bolivia is the *Junta de Auxilio Escolar*, which also exceeded the teachers' expectations, for, 'while its first object was the support and improvement of the school (premises, attendance, furniture, teachers' accommodation, &c.)', its programmes included many plans for rural welfare, and its influence 'soon extended to all centres of communication: highways, meeting-places, public squares;

lumber camps, farm workers' quarters, &c., where the rural teacher was always the counsellor, guide, director, promoter, and leader'.¹³

We have already noted (p. 85) the danger of the teacher doing too much himself, leaving too little scope for the people freely to think and decide for themselves, and thus in effect stifling the growth of any effective local leadership apart from his own. Even at the Nambe school the teachers, good though they were, seem to have fallen into this error, for, so we are told, 'Unfortunately, the high level of performance which reached its peak about 1941 has not been maintained. The withdrawal of outside financial support and guidance in 1942, the loss of teaching and supervisory personnel to more favoured communities, and especially the loss of direct guidance from Dr. Tireman have handicapped the school in recent years. Today the functional and community orientation of the curriculum is not as apparent as it was during the life of the experiment. Nambe, through the loss of its best teachers and the support and guidance of outside agencies, has lost some of its vitality and originality and has tended to become a more or less traditional rural school.'¹⁴

There are two reasons for such failures: the one, the more obvious, the replacement of keen enthusiastic teachers by others who are less keen; the other, the teachers' failure to develop the community school *with* rather than *for* the people, so that the people as well as the teachers control and feel responsible for the changes that take place. In fact, however 'functional' or 'community orientated' a school may be, it is the exception for ordinary folk to be allowed any real say about what the school should do or how it should be done. Most community schools, like most other schools, are

controlled by external authority, and it is to this authority, not to the people, that the teachers feel responsible.

But if the authority is willing to delegate some of its control to the teacher, and through him to the people, the teacher then has a chance of really interesting the people in the school, and of making it a truly rewarding and educative project for the people concerned. The most common objectives of community projects—roads, bridges, school buildings, improved water-supplies, and so on—provide the community with useful amenities and with reasons for working together, but they all have the same disadvantage that none of them gives more than a temporary stimulus to community feeling and action. The school on the other hand can provide a continuing stimulus. It is a permanent local institution, and it exists primarily to serve the children who in every community are a constant focus of interest and affection. By inviting the people to share in the control and development of the school, the teacher provides them with a permanent community project which can interest and involve them in providing for the educational needs, not only of their children, but of themselves as well.

For reasons already mentioned (p. 87) teachers are rarely willing to do this, but they have done it in some places, and with some success. One of the most interesting and best documented experiments of this kind was made by Pedro T. Orata some twenty years ago in an Amerindian community at Kyle, South Dakota, in the United States.

This experiment was deliberately designed to implement the purposes of the Indian Reorganization Act. This Act was intended to encourage the Indian people

to support themselves, manage their own affairs, improve their houses and standards of living, and preserve and improve their cultural heritage. Circumstances at Kyle were very unfavourable to the achievement of these purposes since the people had long been accustomed to feel that it was the duty and responsibility of the government to support them, or at least to provide them with jobs to enable them to stand on their own feet.

From the beginning of this experiment, the staff was determined to arouse the interest of the Indians in managing their own affairs as well as to teach them better ways of living, and they aimed to achieve both purposes by regularly consulting their pupils and the adults about the programme of the school. Much of this programme centred on a series of projects in which everyone—teachers, pupils, and adults—shared.

Separate clubs were set up for educational work with men and women, but both clubs had frequent joint meetings. It was at these meetings that the people were invited to discuss policy, decide what the children should be taught, help in planning the school's projects, and evaluate the work already done. 'The group was assured that the people would be consulted with reference to specific problems that might arise in the future and that the principal would enforce the will of the group rather than rely solely upon his own judgement. Emphasis was placed on the fact that unless the school and the community moved along together there was danger that the work at school might be nullified in the home, the place in which the children spend the major portion of their time.'¹⁵

The people's first reaction to this approach was hesitant. 'At first they were timid and some of them

thought we were giving them responsibilities that were ours and for which we were being paid. But they soon caught the spirit of it and went ahead. . . . There were always among them a few that would disagree with any plan proposed, and we let them talk it over until finally they saw their mistakes. In some cases, their plan could be improved, but we let them go ahead, anyway. Later in the evaluation of the work, they saw how they could have done better. We found that they always did better if they felt that they had a part in making decisions.’¹⁶

In this way every new development at the school was the outcome of discussion between the teachers and the people, and when they did not agree it was the people who prevailed. ‘One time one of us made the mistake of objecting to a plan they had made. Like a flash, the leader said: “You told us at the beginning that we take the responsibility for making the plan and carrying it out. Now you tell us we are wrong and have to do as you say.” We realized, then, that we were learners, too, and changed our ways. . . . When we planned the school-community garden, we called in for consultation the men who knew the work. Right along they worked with the pupils. Later, at harvest-time, we gathered the women to help plan how to preserve the vegetables for the winter. They and the pupils did the canning. After every major activity was completed, we interviewed them and asked them . . . to tell us frankly what they thought of it and to suggest ways and means of doing it better next time.’¹⁷

The school had a practice cottage for home economics teaching, and the adults were invited to say what they thought about it, and what they wanted the girls to learn that would be of use to them in their homes.

Some parents did not think that the cottage was of much use, but others thought it was useful, thought the boys should have a practice cottage too, and made suggestions about what the boys and girls should learn. Some parents then invited the teachers into their homes to see things for themselves. These visits were followed by further meetings, but always the teachers made it clear that it was up to the parents and their sons and daughters to decide what needed doing in their homes. The teachers were ready to advise, but only when their advice was sought.

The outcome of these discussions, we are told, was the 'overhauling' of each home: 'toilets were constructed or improved so that they did not smell and were inaccessible to flies; bedding was washed and aired for the first time in months or ever; partitions were made wherever possible with existing lumber or boxes found under the house, or with moving cupboards or pieces of furniture before the family went to bed at night; the stoves, where there were oil stoves, were cleaned, and transferred to places where they were less likely to cause fire; many homes were whitewashed with material that was found a few miles from the village; ventilation was improved, &c.'

The project also had an effect on the school staff: 'We, the teachers, surveyed our own homes and decided that we should do a number of things to improve their livability. So did the janitors and bus-drivers. We later found that the trader in our community rearranged his own home and the store, and that the priest caused the church to be cleaned and his own house improved.'¹⁸

The Kyle experiment was intended to demonstrate two things, although it lasted for only one year: first, that the good teacher can increase the effectiveness of

his work with children and adults by sharing with the people his control and direction of school affairs; and, second, that by doing so he can stimulate them to become generally more interested in running their own affairs. This, we are told, was the one change that no discriminating observer could have missed. 'The Indians in Kyle could not be bossed around as easily as before. They were likely to raise an objection to any plan in the making and execution of which they had had no part. They were likely also to have a sense of pride in their work and confidence in their ability to do things, themselves, that have been done for them in the past by the [government's] employees.'¹⁹

This change of attitude is illustrated by a comment made by one of the Indians at the end of the year. 'When the programme was initiated this year,' he said, 'I did not know what it was all about. In fact, I put up a complaint to the principal and told him what I thought about his policy. He told us often that we could complain if we wanted to, which was something new. His policy was to ask the people to determine the policy of the school. Gradually I came to realize what was happening to me and to others about me. Whenever something turned up at the school and an adult meeting was called and the members discussed policies and plans, it seemed utterly a waste of time to the adults to have to discuss questions which could have been decided by the teachers themselves, as they have always done in the past. Then, too, the question "why" always bothered me, but the people and I soon found ourselves asking why and how, and I began criticizing what was being done and finally resenting if I was not consulted on what was done. . . . We suddenly discovered we could do it!'²⁰

The Kyle experiment had no widespread immediate effect. Indeed, it was not until some fifteen years later that Orata's original four-volume report 'was removed from the shelf, dusted, and condensed', and published as a single volume of 220 pages.²¹ But in any case its ideas were so revolutionary that it would have been unrealistic to have expected them to be quickly and widely adopted. Even in the Philippines, where Parent-Teacher Associations are to be found in every school and have legal standing, they are used mainly to raise funds for buildings and equipment or for supplementing the teachers' salaries, although sometimes, as at San Esteban, a P.T.A. will also take the lead in starting a community project.²² But they have little or no say in determining what the school shall teach and do. Nor, indeed, have most of the teachers. 'Objectives, curricula, procedures, and evaluation are still mainly the work of the Central Office of the Bureau of Public Schools, and while teachers are encouraged to change the outlines and courses, or construct curriculum materials, they need to be stimulated further to increase their participation in curriculum making.'²³

This was written by the same Pedro Orata who had been responsible for the Kyle experiment many years before and who had since spent some seven years on community education work in his native Philippines. Here, Orata recognizes that it is even more difficult to encourage the people to share in curriculum development than the teachers, but he is convinced that it should be done. 'Unless and until the people have a part, as the Indians did in Kyle, in determining school policies and in planning school-community projects, the school may be *of* the community in the sense that it is physically located there, and it may be *for* the

community partly because certain extracurricular activities are undertaken by the teachers on its behalf, but it is not a school *by* the community in any sense of the term at all.²⁴

Most teachers and administrators would think long and carefully before they committed themselves to Orata's ideas, even for the small rural school. They would feel that the teacher who consulted the people about school affairs would let himself in for a lot of quite unnecessary trouble, and that anyway most village people are far too ignorant to come to wise decisions affecting school affairs. Chaos, they might think, would quickly follow.

These opinions deserve respect, but there is also something to be said for Orata's viewpoint. It can hardly be disputed, for instance, that many attempts to use the schools for community education have failed because the people did not understand or value the changes introduced. We may well think that some of these failures could have been avoided if teachers and educational authorities had taken the people more into their confidence, suggesting and explaining, inviting comment and discussion, and thereby educating people, however slowly, to *want* a functional, community school—if indeed this was the type of school best fitted to their needs.

It may take a long time to reach agreement in this way, and the programme may still be far from ideal from the teacher's point of view, but at least the people will then understand and support it. They will feel that it is *their* programme and not a programme thrust upon them; that the school is *their* school, and that it exists to serve *their* purposes rather than the purposes of government or some other external agency. It is when

people feel like this about the school that it becomes most effective as a potential means of community education—that it becomes in effect a community school.

I have already suggested some of the reasons why this kind of approach has never won much favour with school administrators and teachers, but some have tried it. I have had personal experience of its value in one of the emirates of Northern Nigeria at a time when the people were apathetic, even hostile, to the schools. This unfavourable situation was quickly and completely changed by inviting the elders and parents to form informal local committees, and invariably consulting them on all matters affecting the curriculum (especially on matters which affected farming, crafts, and religious teaching); the appointment and transfer of teachers; the dates of the school holidays; the enforcement of school discipline; and in fact anything else that might possibly affect school-community relationships. The people now had a real share in the control of affairs of the school and could ensure that it served their interests and met their needs. 'The results were remarkable. Within four years the number of children in school had trebled, the children presenting themselves for admission far exceeded the numbers the schools could take in, attendances improved from 65 per cent. to 80 per cent. and in some cases to 95 per cent., and wastage became negligible. Long-standing opposition to the enrolment of girls also disappeared after the difficulties had been thoroughly discussed with the elders and measures taken to allay their fears, mainly by inviting a trustworthy and locally selected woman to chaperon the girls in school and teach them to cook.'²⁵

Local school committees of elders—in this case one

elder for each class in the school—are also a feature of the primary school system of the Lutheran Church in Northern Tanganyika. 'No school was permitted to develop without one, and from the outset the local people were made to realize their personal responsibility. Moslammedans and pagans cheerfully and willingly helped to erect the buildings, knowing they were free to express their views, and with assurance that there would be no discrimination on the grounds of religion.'²⁶

From the point of view of the educational administrator, this committee system admittedly has its disadvantages. 'It can be aggravating and embarrassing at times to an education secretary to have so many who ought to be consulted, but the system is surprisingly workable for all that. The missionaries in charge just have to keep in touch with the public, and make the best of the fact that in all their actions they are accountable to some committee.' The mission claims that though 'Mistakes have been made, and the standard of work has suffered at times, yet at present we are holding our own educationally with other agencies, while employing only a skeleton missionary staff, and depending on a ramified system of African self-government. . . .'²⁷

These examples of people sharing in control of school affairs with the teacher are the exceptions rather than the rule, and the general situation more nearly resembles that in Togoland, where, it is said, 'There is in fact a division between the school and the home, and in this country, that division has continued to be very noticeable even where schools have educated many generations of children, because it is so unusual for the successful pupil to settle down and raise his family in

his own home town.'²⁸ The people send their children to school to increase the cash value of a daughter or the remitting power of a son, and if their particular hopes are not fulfilled the parents may turn against the teacher. Misunderstanding of the teacher's aims, we are told, 'not only affects their confidence in the teacher, but also limits the effectiveness of the teacher's work. . . . Outwardly one cannot fail to notice the neat buildings, the spacious, airy, clean compounds of the schools, with their flowers and even vegetable gardens, and the contrast with unplanned village streets, homes with small windows, seldom opened, rooms shared with animals, and drains that do not soak away. So great is the contrast that many children keep what they learn in school entirely separate in their minds from what they do at home.'²⁹

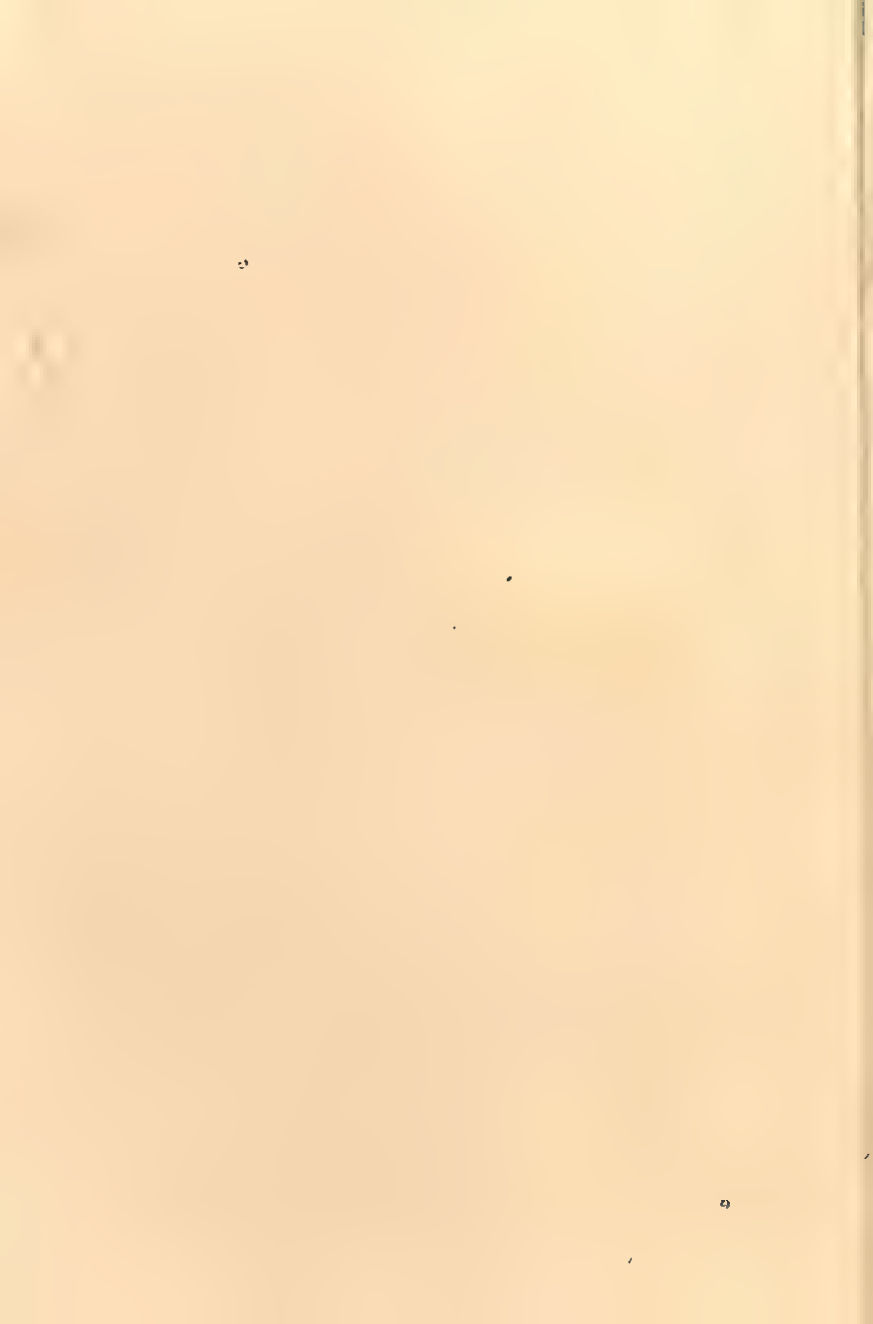
The Trans-Volta/Togoland authorities hope to solve this problem by establishing Parent-Teacher Associations to get parents to understand the real aims of the school, and to help teachers find out what the parents want. But they are aware of difficulties. 'Schools in many places have lived so long in a world apart that teachers feel a sort of despair at the idea of bridging the gap by means of a Parent-Teacher Association.' They are afraid of parents interfering in school affairs, and they 'are dismayed, for instance, by the technical difficulty of calling a meeting of parents who will certainly be late, if indeed they are willing to attend at all.'³⁰ In Trans-Volta/Togoland the authorities hope to overcome these difficulties by using the mass education staff of the Ghana Department of Social Welfare and Community Development to call the meetings, bring teachers and people together, and help them to understand their respective rights and duties.

Since the mass education staff have already succeeded in winning the people's confidence and arousing their interest in communal activities, they should certainly be useful in helping to bridge the existing gap between the teachers and the people. But in the long run everything will depend on the teachers learning to think of themselves as servants of the community as well as agents of an educational 'authority', and many of the teachers will find this a difficult thing to do. Experience in other areas has already shown that people will not go on coming to P.T.A. meetings unless they feel that the teachers really want their advice and will respect their opinions. 'The failure of parents to assemble for a meeting', writes an Adult Education Supervisor in the Philippines, 'may be attributed to many factors, some of which are: (1) meetings are called only at a minute's notice and, at times, the schoolchildren are sent out to invite their parents to attend these meetings, (2) parents are called to a meeting only when the school needs financial assistance, and (3) parents do not see any relationship between topics discussed in the meeting with actual life situations, hence they are not interested.'³¹

In this chapter we have seen that there are two main direct approaches to adults open to the teacher. One approach is for the teacher to play an active part in community life. The establishment of the *puroks* in the Philippines, the 3-F action committee in La Plaine, and the men's and women's clubs in Bolivia, and the community services provided by the Nambe school in New Mexico are all examples of work of this kind. The second approach is for the teacher to invite the people to share with him control of school affairs, thus making the school a community school in every sense of the

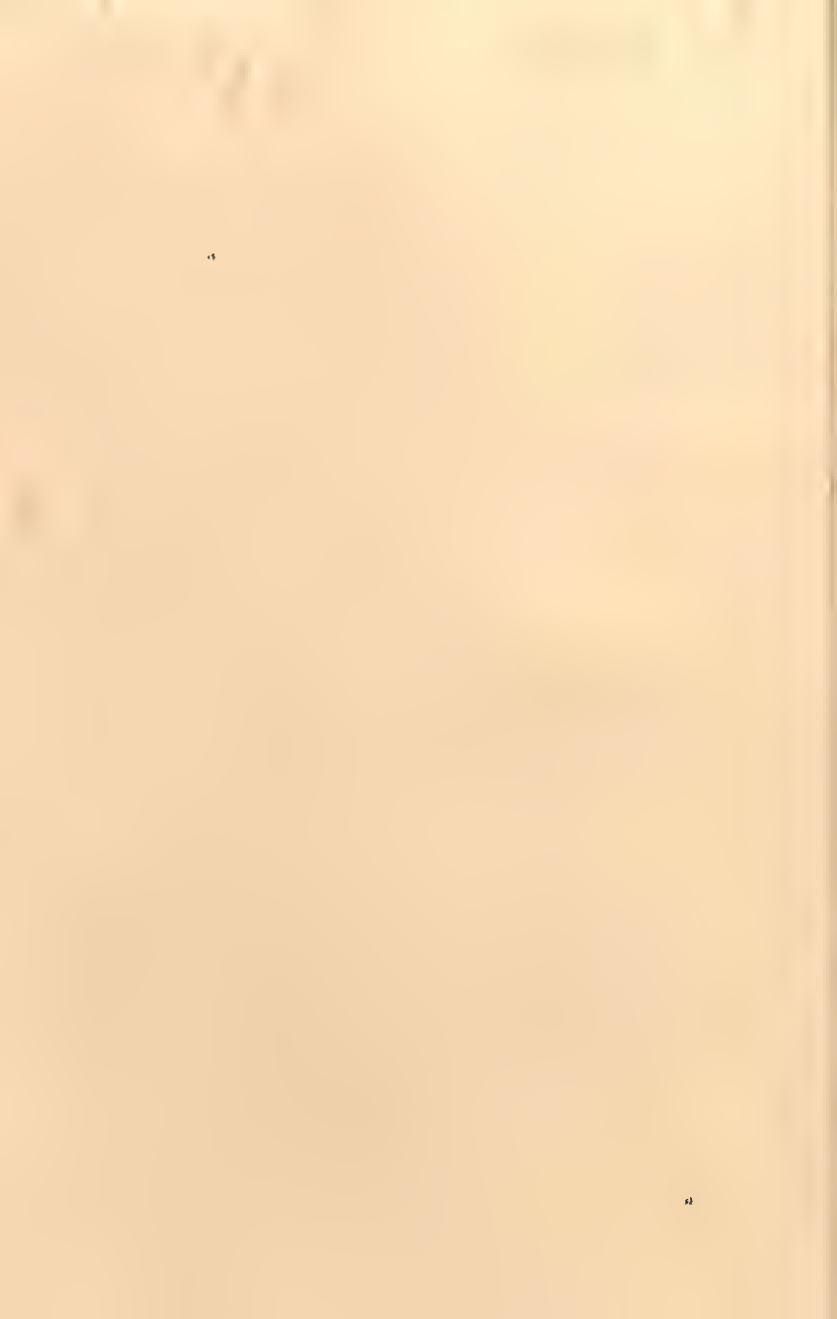
word. We have noted some of the few experiments in this field, and also some of the reasons why it is unpopular with many teachers.

However, in all the examples so far discussed, except the last, we have been able to assume that the teachers are keen and that the main problem is how they can best interest and influence the people. But these were selected examples, and the truth is that most teachers in most countries are anything but keen on branching out into what seems to them a new, difficult, and sometimes even a threatening field. It is no good administrators and reformers deploring this attitude for it is quite a reasonable one. Their best hope of getting more good community schools is to train their teachers properly for community work, provide them in their villages with the kind of help and services they need, and leave them free to plan with local people what the school can do to serve their needs and interests.



PART THREE

THE TEACHER AND THE
COMMUNITY SCHOOL



INTRODUCTION

IN the last four chapters we have seen that the community school can take different forms¹ in different countries. Whatever form it takes, however, it always makes great demands on the enthusiasm, skill, and energy of the teachers—demands that many teachers are unwilling and, indeed, untrained to meet. This is a major fact that anyone who plans to develop and extend community education through the school must take into account. To neglect it, or to fail to deal effectively with it, foredooms even the most promising scheme to failure.

This problem has rarely received the attention it deserves, mainly because all that most countries have to show are isolated experiments started by enthusiastic teachers in their own schools, whereas the problem arises in serious form only in schemes planned on a district, provincial, or national basis. Such schemes necessarily affect many teachers, and it cannot by any means be assumed that they will all be willing to co-operate. They are likely to resent having extra work imposed on them, and many of them are likely to lack the aptitude and skill, and hence the confidence, to do it well. No area scheme therefore has much chance of success unless a good deal of care is taken to interest teachers in it, train them in whatever new skills they need, help them as much as possible 'on the job', and ensure that they are helped, not hindered, by the educational system within which they work.

At present there are only a few such area schemes, and fewer still which have been well documented and

described. One of these is the scheme, now some fifteen years old, which is operated jointly by the Bolivian and United States governments through an organization called Scide (*Servicio Cooperativo Interamericano de Educacion*). Another is the community school movement in the Philippines. A third, and much the largest, is the basic education scheme in India.* It is experience in these three countries which provides the bulk of the illustrative material for the chapters which follow.

As might be expected, the situation in these three countries and the details of the problems encountered are not strictly comparable. The Scide programme in Bolivia, for instance, has been mainly concerned with the very backward Amerindian communities living in the Altiplano, a high plain in the Andes. These people have been very little affected by economic development, and they have never learnt to value the school as a means of obtaining paid employment in the towns. In this respect, therefore, Scide has a far easier task than the governments in India and the Philippines, where the people have learnt to value the school in its traditional form mainly for this reason. It has other special advantages, too. It is helped by the United States with money and skilled personnel, and since it is concerned with only a few schools—there are over 4,000 rural

* The basic school is the Indian form of the community school. Basic education was originated by Mahatma Gandhi, and its central idea is that all education, especially primary education, should be centred round a basic craft and the physical and social environment of the child. E. A. Pires summarizes its aims as follows: 'To sum up, the ultimate objective of basic education is not only a balanced and integrated personality but also a wholesome and harmonious society. In the development of such a society, the school becomes an instrument of social and economic change, and the teachers and bigger pupils play a large and effective part in programmes of social and economic welfare.' (The quotation is from p. 90, *The Training of Rural School Teachers*, Unesco, 1954.)

elementary schools in Bolivia, and Scide is directly concerned with only 128—it can provide supervisory and technical staff and equipment to a far higher standard than could possibly be reached in any unaided and truly nation-wide scheme.

The problem in the Philippines and in India is much more complicated. The governments of both countries have planned to introduce the community school on a nation-wide scale, but they have encountered difficulties with both teachers and people because they were already well accustomed to schools of the formal type and by no means enthusiastic about the new ideas. Thus, although the national programme in the Philippines was introduced in 1949, progress in many areas has been very slow, and in 1956 the government decided to set up a new community development department, separate from and independent of the schools, to be directly responsible for community development work. This means that the schoolteacher is no longer regarded as the key community development worker. He is only one of a team of departmental workers headed by a whole-time community development officer.

The government of India has also encountered difficulties in implementing its basic school programme. Here, unlike the Philippines, the schools have never been regarded as the principal agency for community development, but the basic school, which is the Indian form of the community school, has from the first been accepted as part of India's National Development Plan, and therefore as an integral part of India's national policy. So far, however, it has not been very successful. At the end of the first Five-year Plan, only one school-child in twenty-five was attending a basic school.

Of course, it would be unrealistic to expect really

quick progress, even with government sponsored schemes, because changes in the schools affect so many people. Parents need to be convinced that the future prospects of their children will not be adversely affected, and teachers that the proposed changes are practicable and worthwhile. But that is not all. Secondary schools, and even universities, may need persuading to alter their entrance requirements to allow the products of the new community schools to enter secondary and higher education, and the training colleges will need to rethink, replan, and expand their training programmes. In addition to all this, new textbooks and additional equipment will be needed in the schools. These difficulties and attempts to deal with them will be discussed in the next two chapters. But when all these difficulties have been taken into account, one is still left wondering whether the slow progress that has so far been made is solely due to them, or whether the advocates of community school policies do not create intractable difficulties for themselves by sponsoring ideas that are sometimes impracticable, and sometimes even educationally unsound. How far this may be true will be considered in the final chapter.

VIII

HELPING THE TEACHER

RECENT experience in India and the Philippines has shown that the support of teachers and parents as well as of governments is needed to ensure the success of a community school policy. But such a policy will be

unpopular with most of the teachers if it threatens them with extra work, and with most of the parents if it threatens their children's chances of getting a job when they leave school.

Very careful planning is needed to deal adequately with difficulties of this kind, and the main reason for the slow progress of the community school movement in India and the Philippines is that in neither country was the need for this foreseen.

The only effective way of meeting the parents' natural concern about the future of their children is to make the community school a sound and integral part of the national education system, so that the child who attends it can have as good a chance as children from other schools to pass the qualifying examinations for secondary or higher education, or for jobs. Yet in neither country has this yet been done although the need for action is now recognized. Thus Pedro Orata, in an article published in 1954, writes: 'It is our hope that, beginning next school year, when half of the day will be devoted to practical, especially gainful, work activities, we could interest institutions of higher learning so that they recognize two or three units of work experience along with the traditional academic units for entrance into colleges and universities. While we emphasize preparation for life, we do not discount the only too human a tendency, and a good one, on the part of our students for further training after they graduate. . . . We feel, however, that effective preparation for life is good preparation for college.'¹ That may be true, but colleges and universities may still need to ensure that such work experience is educationally worthwhile.

The same problem faces the basic school movement

in India, and K. L. Shrimali has stated it very clearly in the *Indian Education Quarterly*. 'To my mind', he writes, 'the co-existence of Basic education and traditional education presents the most serious problem in Indian education today. In States where Basic education has been introduced, it is confined mainly to the rural areas and the rest of the schools in urban areas continue to impart education in the traditional manner. Secondary Education Boards and institutions of Higher education have not so far given recognition to these institutions and the students going out of Basic schools have to take a further entrance examination for being admitted to the High schools. Some post-Basic institutions have also been started but their students again have difficulty in finding admission to the Universities.'²

The Assessment Committee on Basic Education studies this problem in some detail. It notes that, 'This is a big issue wherever Basic education has been started. The uncertainties as to what will happen to children who pass out of Senior Basic schools and who wish to go up for Higher education are very real and give cause for profound anxiety in the minds of parents.'³

The Committee goes on to plead for clear thinking on this issue. 'Basic education', it says, 'has now been accepted by all those concerned as the pattern of Elementary education. If this means anything, it is that within some years all Elementary schools in the country will have become Basic schools. Many millions of children will be educated in these Basic schools and a large number of them, particularly in the coming years, will go up for Higher education of some kind or other.'⁴ The Committee therefore recommends the establishment of a large number of post-basic schools, and insists that they must be given the same status and importance

as every other kind of secondary school. 'If Post-Basic schools are treated in any way as less than the other types of Secondary schools, we shall only create fresh problems and difficulties for which there will be hardly any solution.'⁵

The Committee is also concerned about what is to happen to boys and girls passing out of senior basic schools who wish to join secondary schools other than post-basic schools. 'We have no doubt in our minds that it should be made permissible for them to continue their studies in other Secondary schools, whether they are Multi-Purpose High schools or other special High schools. The principle to be accepted should be to give such students credit for the successful years of study in Basic schools and there should be no bar against such students being admitted in all types of institutions of Secondary education along with other students who have finished an equal number of successful years of study in non-Basic schools. . . .

'But the matter does not end here. The further question arises what is to happen to boys and girls who pass out of Post-Basic schools. They should be permitted to join in appropriate courses of studies in the universities. If this is not done, the trouble of uncertainties will come rebounding back into the Post-Basic schools and from there even to the Basic schools. Governments concerned, as also the universities, may take all the care necessary to make Post-Basic education good enough in standards to make this process of dovetailing smooth and easy. But once that is done, there should be no further room for any doubts and hesitations as to how far boys and girls passing out of Senior Basic schools may climb in Higher education. They should be allowed the unrestricted right of climbing as high as they can.'⁶

If these recommendations are implemented, they will certainly help a great deal to relieve the anxiety of the parents of children attending basic schools, but the Committee believes that 'all the pressure of persuasion' will be needed to get them accepted by the institutions and educational authorities concerned. Yet without their willing co-operation 'the whole programme of dovetailing Basic education with Higher education may be held up at innumerable small points and even side-tracked'.⁷

The more one studies the reaction of parents and teachers to the introduction of community schools, the more one realizes that the real cause of much of the trouble is that rightly or wrongly, the administrators, supervisors, and university authorities are unwilling to make changes in other parts of the existing national educational system. This is a source of far greater difficulty than objections by parents, or even teachers. Indeed, one of the main recommendations of the Report of the Assessment Committee on Basic Education in India is that 'the whole outlook and psychology within Education Departments' has to be changed. In many States, notes the Committee, 'the few Basic schools constitute little isolated patches and are surrounded by overwhelming areas of non-Basic schools and those in charge of Basic schools looked pitiable in the plight in which they were caught. In more than one State the educational authorities appeared to look upon Basic schools and Basic Training schools as kept in quarantine so that these should not affect the good health of the bigger belts of non-Basic institutions.'⁸

The advocates of the community school movement in the Philippines have also been aware of the same difficulty and have felt that it should be dealt with by

retraining. Thus J. V. Aguilar has stated that the educational leadership needed retraining, *starting from the top*, and he describes the first retraining conference which was held in 1949. 'That three-day conference of division supervisors, secondary principals, and district supervisors,' he says, 'seventy all told, was an eye-opener' in revealing the extent of the retraining that needed to be done.⁹

The Head of the Unesco Technical Assistance Mission to the Philippines indicated some of these retraining needs in an address he gave to school administrators attending a community school leadership seminar in 1953. He pointed out that the Philippines has a highly centralized school system, and that there is always a tendency in a centralized system for administrators 'to become dictatorial in their dealings with principals and teachers under them. This will make the teachers, in turn, dictatorial, and all the training you wish to give for democratic living will be lost. It may sometimes seem a waste of time to be thoroughly democratic in your actions, but I assure you that it is tremendously important.' He points out too that educators often tend to react too defensively to new ideas, seeking ways of justifying what they are already doing rather than accepting them and trying them out. And yet, he said, 'Superintendents exist for only one purpose and that is to make it possible for teachers to do a better job of teaching and for the children to learn more.'¹⁰

We have noted that the reformers in India, as well as in the Philippines, believe that the success of their new policy depends on the retraining of every existing educational administrator, including those at the very top. The Basic Education Assessment Committee is

particularly outspoken on this point. 'Though the ideological battle for Basic education has been more or less won as a matter of educational policy, it is our experience that educational authorities, with some conspicuous exceptions, do not either fully understand the practical implications of the new system, or, what is worse, they do not care to understand the same.'¹¹

This, says the Committee, has to be changed, and the first and most important step they suggest is the organization of an all-India Seminar of Chief Ministers, Education Ministers, Secretaries of Education, and the Directors of Public Instruction to discuss and thrash out the detailed, as well as the overall, programme for basic education, and the kind of administrative changes needed to promote it efficiently and without delay.¹²

This seminar, they say, should be followed up with conferences and seminars for officials at all levels of seniority. 'It will not be enough that Education Departments mechanically accept the policy of Basic education, but there will have to be full and clear understanding of the implications of Basic education and specially of the practical day-to-day steps that will have to be taken in implementing the programme. This means the adequate and appropriate training of educational officials in Basic education at all levels in Education Departments. *Inspecting Officials actually working at the Basic school level as also those in the higher ranks of Inspection work, District and Divisional or Regional Officers, Deputy Directors and Directors of Public Instruction will all require to be trained and orientated* [my italics] in a manner suitable to different levels in the programme of Basic education.'¹³ The Committee recommends that the seminars for the Directors of Public Instruction should be arranged at an all-India level, and in places where

there is plenty of good basic education to be seen. Places like New Delhi, it suggests, are unsuitable for this purpose.¹⁴

The Committee suggests that seminars and conferences should be used partly to orientate administrators to the basic school policy, and partly to work out with them how it can best be put into effect. As far as policy is concerned, far too many administrators, even those in high authority, notes the Committee, interpret it according to their own fancy, and far too many are inefficient in carrying it out. It is essential, too, that the senior administrators should be willing to delegate some of their administrative and financial powers to local committees and councils which can enlist local support and make decisions on small matters without interminable delays. Even examinations, 'one of the most centralized things in the present day educational system', must be decentralized. Inspecting officers also must change their attitude and become guides, collaborators, and friends of the teachers rather than merely fault-finders. Even good basic teachers will be ineffective unless they get the kind of help and encouragement they need.

Much of the needed help, of course, can be provided by courses of training, a subject which will be dealt with in the next chapter, but apart from this the teacher needs help of other kinds and must largely rely on his administrator or supervisor to provide it.

One thing he needs but does not always get, especially in countries with a highly centralized administration, is enough freedom to adapt his programme to suit local conditions. 'Uniform schedules, class programmes, methods, and materials for all schools of the Philippines are outmoded', reports a committee of the Board of

National Education. 'Greater flexibility and adaptability to the particular needs and conditions of the different localities should be encouraged.'¹⁵

He also needs suitable teaching materials. One of the greatest difficulties encountered in attempts to relate the teaching of the school more effectively to local community life is the extra work load thus thrown upon the teacher, who finds that his former textbooks are no longer of much use to him. He can, of course, be asked to produce his own local teaching materials, but this is time-consuming and there are limits to what he can be expected to do. 'The teacher', notes a Scide annual report, 'who must spend long hours preparing by hand reading material for each of his thirty to forty pupils wastes time, energy, and ambition. . . . Hence a materials laboratory and production section was set up this year in the rural division to determine the needs for teaching materials in all areas; to plan with technicians means of meeting these needs; to produce the recommended materials; to constantly evaluate the content and use of such materials; and to train local staff in the continued development and production of teaching materials and in their application to the improvement of classroom teaching.'¹⁶

In India the Assessment Committee on Basic Education recognizes a similar need in the basic schools and recommends the same kind of action, but it notes rather sadly that although 'everybody with whom we discussed this matter considered it to be one of great urgency', very little has so far been done about it.¹⁷

In the Amerindian areas of the United States the problem has been approached by getting teachers to co-operate with specialists of the central office in the development of teaching guides and curricular outlines.

'A good example of such an outline is a sixty-seven page mimeographed document entitled *Bi-lingual Curriculum Guide*, prepared by some one hundred teachers in the Navaho area in 1948.'¹⁸

Action has taken a rather different form in the Philippines, where it has been sponsored by the Philippines Community School Training Centre at Bayambang. This training centre was started as a joint project of Unesco and the Philippine Government in 1953, and one of its stated objectives was 'the printing and preparation of materials for adult education and community education'.¹⁹ The experts at this Centre believed that the people best qualified by experience to prepare curriculum materials for the community schools were the teachers and their local supervisors. They knew that a good many materials of this kind had already been produced, but that unfortunately many of them were too crude to be of real use.

It was mainly in order to tackle this problem that they decided to hold a National Workshop at the Centre from 30 January to 10 March 1956, 'for the preparation of reading materials in the Philippine languages for community education'. This workshop was attended by fifty-one supervisors and principals representing most of the provincial divisions in the Philippines, and also by five provincial librarians. Its main objective was to teach the practical skills needed for the preparation and writing of books suitable for children, youths, and adults with the intention of 'preparing the delegates, if and when their respective divisions would decide, to help conduct workshops and work conferences on the preparation of reading materials incidental to the use of the Mother tongue'.²⁰ A related objective was to 'evolve short courses of training

for teachers in rural areas to prepare such reading materials'.²¹

Although the main object of the workshop was training rather than production, it did nevertheless result in the production of forty-six booklets in twelve different dialects and the delegates worked at all hours in order to finish them. The Programme Director admits that the booklets were far from perfect but, he says, 'with the lack of reading materials in rural areas and taking into account that this is but the first attempt, the workshoppers have done more than what is expected. The booklets may be perfected after several revisions and more hard work.'²² And, it might be added, the real success of this workshop must be judged later on, when it has been seen what effect it has had in stimulating further workshops organized on a local divisional basis.

Teachers also need help of other kinds. Even if they have been trained to teach in a community school, they are still likely to need specific help and guidance in dealing with local problems.

To some extent this help can be provided within the educational system by appointing specialists in the field of community education as travelling supervisors. Scide has done this in Bolivia. Its supervisors are trained in education, agriculture, and hygiene, and they spend a week or two at a time in each district. 'It means a great deal to teachers in some far-away spot in the mountains to have technicians in their own field drop in from the outside world, not as visiting firemen, but as down-to-earth specialists, who can hang a door on a new henhouse or make a compost heap.'²³

Visits of this kind can do a great deal to help the teacher and to raise his morale, but he will usually have to wait a long time between one visit and the next.

This is why it is felt that the administrator should try to establish a close liaison with other departments engaged in village work and get them to co-operate with the teacher of the community school. 'One of the major problems facing the community school movement in this country', reports a committee of the Board of National Education in the Philippines, 'is the lack of working co-ordination of the now apparently dispersed efforts of the community school and other agencies (both public and private) engaged in community development. There is mounting evidence that there are institutions or agencies whose educative functions could contribute greatly to the community-school programme and to community education and development if their activities and projects were co-ordinated to avoid duplication and waste of effort.' The committee feels that the Social Welfare Administration, the Bureau of Agricultural Extension, and the Philippine Rural Reconstruction Movement should all co-ordinate their programmes with the work of the school.²⁴

The Indian Assessment Committee on Basic Education makes much the same point: 'Such liaison should be effected at the all-India level, at the State level, and even at the district level. If this is done, many things which appear difficult and are delayed today can be done more quickly and efficiently. It will then be possible, for instance, for the Khadi and Village Industries Board to be persuaded to undertake the prompt and quick supply and delivery of raw materials and craft equipment to Basic schools and Basic Training schools, and all craft work in such institutions may be helped to become more efficient by a sufficient number of experts under the Board taking responsibility for the same.'²⁵

Although there appears to have been a difficulty in securing departmental co-operation in India and the Philippines, there was no difficulty in securing it for a much smaller scheme in Jordan. 'Our most important difficulty, the lack of financial resources, was faced by persuading the government departments concerned to co-operate with us and give us financial help. *We were able to convince these departments by acting as their agents in the three villages and agreeing with them on plans and aims for the fulfilment of our mutual goal of serving the villages.* [My italics.] They co-operated most willingly when they were called upon for technical help. Our patients were sent to the Ministry of Health's clinics and hospitals, the Agricultural Extension Department of the Ministry of Agriculture gave us help and advice, the local veterinary agreed to visit our villages regularly and the Co-operatives Department agreed to give special attention and care to our villages, &c.'²⁶ Perhaps there is a lesson to be learned from this Jordanian experience. Difficulties in getting support for community school programmes may sometimes be due to lack of consultation with other departments when school programmes are being planned.

If the administrator really sets out to help his teachers in all these ways, he can do a good deal to ease their anxieties and encourage them in their work. But when he has done his best it is still true that teachers in community schools are usually expected to work harder and for longer hours than the teacher in the traditional school. This is widely recognized as the most serious of all the barriers that hinder the community school movement. The teacher in an Indian basic school, writes C. J. Varkey feelingly, cannot 'sit down on his chair or stool comfortably, making child after 'child

read the textbook line after line; nor can he go on dictating notes seated in his chair; nor can he go to sleep, allowing the children to copy out a given lesson or to work out half a dozen sums written on the black-board.' He will have to be up and doing—perhaps working all the hour through—making the children learn by doing things. 'Indeed, it is a hard job.'²⁷

This quotation suggests that the average Indian village schoolteacher is unlikely to welcome the activity methods of the Basic school, but after all the Basic school is mainly concerned only with children, and the teacher's load in this kind of school is therefore much lighter than that of teachers who are also expected to do a great deal of work with adults, as they were until recently in the Philippines, especially if they have the misfortune to have to work under an ambitious and dictatorial supervisor. Sympathy for such teachers has been forcibly expressed by at least one superintendent of Philippine schools. 'Need one point', he says, 'to the adult class she has to teach in the evening after a full day's work, or to the scheduled home visits the supervisor is requiring of her, or to the undeserved task of clearing somebody's yard, the street, or the market because of the enthusiasm of some directing head, or to her feverish effort to transform a neighbourhood overnight for the edification of visitors? Where the concept of community effort has not gone beyond the stage in which the adult is treated separately from the child, there is point to a request officially made for a one-day-a-week community work separately conducted from the four-day school week for the child.'²⁸

In general, supervisors in the Philippines seem to have recognized that their community school approach does 'entail extra work for the teachers, that they find

the additional work oppressive, and that this may sometimes react unfavourably on the education of the child. 'The teacher strains under the compulsion of orders, or under the stimulus of a highly competitive venture, or under the possible stigma of inability to climb on the bandwagon. . . . Not infrequently, too, the teacher's drive for community improvement reacts unfavourably on the education of the child. A tired teacher cannot do justice to his young charges, supposing he has also the stamina to give full time to instruction. It is understandable when, instead of observing teaching time, he takes his charges out, on borrowed school time, to help him effect the improvements. To the teacher, community improvement then is no longer additional work, but for the pupil the acquisition of the fundamentals of education is gravely impaired.'²⁹

J. V. Aguilar, whom I have just quoted, maintains that this problem need not arise if teachers in the community school are allowed to adhere to their proper function, which is to stimulate adults to assist in the education of the child and to teach children in a way that ensures that learning spreads to adults. Their job with adults is to establish neighbourhood organizations (the *puroks*), and to interest them in school and community improvement. Admittedly, this makes extra work for the teachers at first. 'Gradually, however, as the organization begins to function properly, especially when it reaches the stage whereby it can operate on its own power and under local leadership, their burden becomes reduced. There will also come a time when teachers will feel fully compensated for their efforts by the personal satisfaction that they get from enjoying the tangible results of their work. There are instances when teachers undertake community school projects of their

own free will without pressure from superior authority simply because they enjoy the work, and when work is enjoyed it becomes less onerous.'³⁰

This may well be, but what about the many teachers who are not very keen and who resent having extra work inflicted on them? It may be a real problem to get them more interested and willing to help. Something, perhaps, can be done by orientation and training. This is the subject of the next chapter.

IX

TRAINING THE TEACHER

WE have already noted that one of the main barriers to the spread of the community school movement in the tropics is the natural reluctance of most of the teachers to accept the additional responsibilities that work in a community school entails, and that administrators cannot cope effectively with this problem merely by issuing 'firmly-worded' circulars condemning teachers for their shortcomings and arbitrarily telling them what they have to do. They have to try to get the teachers to co-operate willingly, and show them what to do and how to do it. In other words, they have to do something about orientation and training.

The need for this is now well recognized. 'It cannot be emphasized too much', states the Assessment Committee on Basic Education, 'that the whole quality of Basic education will largely depend on the quality of training given to teachers. . . . The trainees must get a clear vision of the aims and the revolutionary character

of Basic education. . . . Basic teachers must go out of the Training schools with a high sense of their calling.'¹ 'The first implication [of the community school]', writes a Director of Public Schools in the Philippines, 'is the need for a change of mental attitude on the part of our teachers. A teacher who still holds the view that it is not a part of his job to help people in the community improve their living conditions is an anachronism under our present programme of education.'²

So far, so good. But what is actually being done about it and with what effect? In practice, two kinds of orientation and training are provided: *preliminary* training for teachers-to-be, and *in-service* training for the staff already teaching in the schools. This second group of existing teachers present a far more difficult problem than the first, because they are already trained, or at least accustomed, to work in the formal type of school. Thus in-service training will involve *re-training*, which is always a difficult thing to do.

1. *Preliminary Training*

First, let us look at the simpler problem of preliminary training. Training is always related to a purpose—in this case instilling the ideas and teaching the skills needed by teachers working in community schools. But there are many ideas of what a community school should be and many differences between communities, and these differences are naturally reflected in the work of the training centres. Three major aims, however, can generally be recognized: to train the teacher in what to teach and how to teach it; to show him how to develop initiative, leadership, and socially responsible attitudes among the children; and to give him some kind of experience of community work among adults.

Surprisingly, for one might have thought that it would be assumed, reports on training both in India and the Caribbean stress that teachers for rural community schools should be trained 'in genuine rural areas, away from the bustle and din of towns'.³ 'Where this is not possible', states the Caribbean report, 'arrangements should be made to have at least a substantial part of this training carried out in a rural setting.'⁴

Indeed, unless this is done, it is hard to see how the major training aims can be achieved, for everywhere there is a great emphasis on practical training in agriculture, gardening, and other rural crafts and industries and these cannot be learnt and practised properly in the towns. Most training centres have their own farms and workshops and they value manual work both for teaching practical skills and emphasizing the dignity of labour. At the Warisata Normal School, Bolivia, 'Student teachers are taught conservation of the soil, use of fertilizers, reforestation, and they practise what they learn in the fields and gardens of the school, on which they raise the staple Altiplano crops of quinoa, potatoes, barley, and oca, and have added alfalfa and some variety of vegetables. Their labours keep the school supplied with produce for the kitchen. Animal husbandry is taught, and Brown Swiss small bulls will be raised here for better cattle-breeding. Irrigation is planned, for which water will be brought from the stream coming in at the foot of Illampu.'⁵ In some cases this practical, manual bias has been carried to great lengths. For instance, when the Hasanoglan training centre was started in Turkey in 1940, the students did much more than was strictly needed to prepare themselves for the teaching profession. They lived

in tents while they constructed the buildings for their own centre, helped to bring water and electricity, planted thousands of trees, and made vineyards, gardens, orchards, and lawns.⁶

In spite of the emphasis given to practical work in most of the training centres, it is not invariably well done, and the teaching of traditional crafts, in particular, tends to suffer, as there is often no one on the staff who is really competent to teach them. In India, states the report of the Assessment Committee, 'Weaving teachers in Basic Training schools are generally persons who, after completing the Higher Elementary or Secondary school, undergo training in weaving in Technical institutions. Most of them do not possess enough skill to be able to earn their living by weaving. . . . Unless the really skilled traditional craftsmen who are capable of making their living from their own work are brought into the Basic Training schools, craft training in these institutions will not be efficient or productive enough and pupil-teachers will go out after their training as half-baked craft teachers who will hand over their own inefficiency in craft to the boys and girls in the Basic schools.'⁷ Warisata in Bolivia faced a somewhat similar problem when it was decided to add basket-making to the normal school curriculum. The arts and crafts instructor solved it by seeking out the remaining members of the basket-makers' guild and learning the traditional craft from them.

But there is more to the community school than practical work in agriculture and handicrafts, for most aspects of the curriculum need adapting to meet the requirements of local community life. To do this, the teacher needs to know his community, and to know it he needs to study it. Most centres training teachers

for community schools attempt to show him how.

Such studies vary greatly in scope and complexity. Some are designed simply to give each individual student practice in collecting and arranging information about the history, geography, economic life, and folklore of one selected community, and to show him how to use it in the school. In the 1930s, at the Katsina Elementary Training Centre in Northern Nigeria, teachers-in-training made this kind of study during a six-week period of individual teaching practice in village elementary schools. With the aid of a skeleton framework of topics and questions, each student compiled a local history based on the information he obtained from the older inhabitants. He also made a survey of the use the community made of its farmland and surrounding 'bush'; of the local crafts, including the methods of production, the sources of the raw materials, and what happened to the finished products; and of the community's trade. In addition, he drew sketch-maps of the village and of the area surrounding it to illustrate his survey. Many of the students made careful drawings of huts, tools, pots, and weaving designs, and in fact of anything that seemed to them of special local significance.

The Katsina students made individual surveys, but when they returned to the centre they had to think out how they could organize similar surveys for the children in their future schools. Some training centres, however, arrange for their teachers-in-training to conduct their surveys as *group projects* in association with the children of their practice schools. There are two good short accounts of experiments of this kind in *Oversea Education*: the one, with some thirty-seven students during their 'second teaching practice in the junior forms of

various Singapore schools;⁸ the other, in the Jabavu Secondary School, the practising school attached to the Education Department of the University College of Fort Hare in the Union of South Africa. The title of the project in this South African experiment was 'The Work of the People in the Victoria East District', and its purpose as far as the schoolchildren were concerned was to introduce them 'to Western conditions of life and labour as they present themselves in a South African village'.⁹

In some areas the training colleges are still heavily criticized for failing to interest their students in such local community studies. In India, states the Assessment Committee on Basic Education, the basic training schools do not do nearly enough to relate their training to the natural and social environment.¹⁰ In the Caribbean area, writes Dr. E. H. Howes, Unesco Consultant on Education, training schemes will need considerable reorientation if students are to learn how to make the maximum teaching use of the environment.¹¹

Dr. Howes goes on to stress that the training centres must themselves become real centres of community life. 'One of the easier ways', he says, 'of learning the importance of community is by actually living the community life. The more, for example, teachers-in-training are given responsibility in college societies and activities generally, without more than remote control from the staff, the better will they be able to understand the principles of self-help and co-operative effort for the community.'

In fact, this principle has already been applied in many training centres. Some of them apply it by giving to councils or committees of students responsibility for organizing much of the daily routine. In the 'Mexe

Rural Teachers' Training College, for instance, student committees are responsible for discipline, farm work, food and accommodation, health and first aid, sports, and social action. With the support of the Students' Council, these committees detail students for the various duties and ensure that each experiences them all in turn. 'Daily, there are teams for service in the dining-room, kitchen, dispensary, sick-bay, principal's office, secretariat, and the various departments. There are others to see that the trucks are in good running order, to help in farming and stock-tending tasks and in the workshops, for ploughing, for the sowing of lucerne, for work in the kitchen gardens, nursery gardens, on the irrigation system and in the piggeries, for feeding stock and poultry, for work in the carpenters' and blacksmiths' shops or in the bakery, to see to the general cleanliness of the establishment, and to look after visitors.'¹²

Other centres try to reach the same objective by organizing a variety of students' clubs and societies. In the Fazenda do Rosario experiment in Brazil, for instance, the students' agricultural training is 'organized on a club basis, beginning as a garden club and later expanding into a farmers' club, at which stage fruit-growing, grafting and the preparation of ground for fruit trees are included. The purpose of these clubs is less to give technical training in the strict sense—which is only suitable for prospective specialists—than to train the members for their social work and try out their qualities of leadership and their sense of social service.

'Co-operatives are used for similar ends. Each term of students is encouraged to set up a consumers' co-operative for the supply of members' school material and articles of daily use at cheaper prices. The position

is the same as regards the social or recreational clubs. More extensive practice is also obtained through participation in the work of the Fazenda's permanent social institutions, e.g. the housewives' club, the clinic and the dispensary. In this way students' social experience is enlarged and opportunities are afforded for the exercise of qualities of leadership.¹³

This enlargement of the student teacher's social experience through service to some outside community is frequently preceded by some kind of community survey. For instance, the Mexe Rural Teachers' Training College already mentioned works in five neighbouring settlements, the social service work being planned and immediate goals set in the light of the data collected on the survey. Among other forms of service, the College claims to have supplied the local people with improved seedlings, lent them the College's stud bulls, allowed them to make tools and household articles in the College's workshops, collaborated with them in improving the supply of drinking water, established dispensaries, and organized sports clubs. 'The students', we are told, 'carry out short-term campaigns as the need arises (e.g. in the case of an epidemic), and also devote part of their periods of intensive teaching practice and in some instances their Sundays to these tasks. The permanent responsibility for this work lies with the rural teachers.'¹⁴

Social service work in many other training centres follows much the same pattern. At Bikram in Bihar, India, writes E. A. Pires, 'a regular programme of social service is drawn up for the benefit of student teachers and it is assiduously followed. Social service in the basic training schools in the Punjab comprises the following work in neighbouring *mohallas* and villages:



V. YOUNG FARMERS' CLUBS

Above: Ghana. Club members
collecting seed.

Below: Fiji. Judging crops
entered for a club competition.





VI. TRAINING STUDENT-TEACHERS FOR PRACTICAL WORK

Bee-keeping at a Turkish Normal School.

(a) improvement in sanitation; (b) adult literacy campaign; (c) distribution of medicines; (d) celebration of festivals; (e) improvement of agriculture and cottage industries; (f) work at fairs; and (g) organization of games and other recreational activities.¹⁵ At Warisata in Bolivia, the staff and students of the training centre organized a health campaign for the local people. They gave 'persuasive and convincing' talks to each family in its own home and held district meetings. They organized the disinfection of the people's homes, formed them into reading and discussion groups, vaccinated them, and showed them how to prepare food. Then at the end of the intensive period, in order to prevent all work stopping automatically, 'it was decided that each team of teachers and trainees should play some part in the work of its zone for the remainder of the year, visiting it only once a week, however, instead of daily'.¹⁶

It is worth noting here that training centres run by religious organizations can sometimes more easily provide their students with natural opportunities of sharing informally in local community life than the secular centres. Thus on Sundays students of Komenda Methodist Training College in Ghana go out to the neighbouring villages to conduct morning worship in the little Methodist chapels. 'After service one of the students of the Red Cross group brings out his dispensary box and treats the simple ailments of the villagers: and in the afternoon both children and adults come along to Sunday School to learn to read. Three larger itinerant groups also help in the work. One, the Preaching Band, conducts open-air services in the villages in turn. A second, the Red Cross team, backs up the efforts of the "resident" dispenser, and holds a

Health Day in each village. The third, a newer and quite encouraging experiment, consists of a dramatic group, which takes freely dramatized Bible stories round to the villages.¹⁷

One cannot read the many accounts of how training centres organize their students' community work without feeling that the approach is often too directive, or at least too paternal, to provide them with really useful and practical experience of working with people. Too many of the centres stress only what their students should do *for* people. There are many fewer references to training students to work *with* them, and it is therefore not altogether surprising to come across references to people's apathy, or to a mention that 'adequate communal self-help has still to be stimulated'.¹⁸

This account of the preliminary training of teachers for work in community schools has necessarily been very brief, and illustrated by only a few representative examples. Yet a great deal of time and money is in fact now being expended on training of this kind, and it is important, I think, that we should ask ourselves whether the aims of the training are sufficiently clear, and its methods well enough designed to achieve the desired results.

Perhaps we can do this best by looking at some of the assumptions that appear to underlie it. One such assumption is that if students study a nearby community, and collect information about it during their training, they will make similar studies of the communities in which they subsequently teach, and develop their own locally orientated curricula from it. A second assumption is that if students are organized as a 'community' during their training by means of students' councils, committees, and societies, and by allocating to

them communal duties and responsibilities, they will learn how they in turn can best prepare their future pupils for adult community life. There is also a third, major assumption, which is that experience of neighbourhood work or service during training will make the students more keen, and more competent, "to work with adults when their training is completed.

Whether these assumptions are true or not of any particular training scheme depends much less on what the students do than on how interested they are in doing it and what they learn from it. For it is the effect of the training on the *attitude* of the students to community work, and on their *skill* in doing it, that alone will count in the long run when the students have left the centre to begin teaching. Unfortunately, it is just these two points that accounts of training schemes tell us least about.

To provide effective preliminary training for the work of the community schools can never be easy, and it is particularly hard in view of the conditions usually prevailing in the training centres. The staff in these centres rarely feel that students have enough time for all the work there is to do, even when they are being trained only for classwork in the formal type of school. Training for the community school imposes a heavy additional load, and finding enough time, particularly for practice in working with adults in neighbouring communities, can be a difficult problem.

Training centres are also almost invariably handicapped by being more or less permanent 'centres', for although they may have been intentionally sited in or near a typical village community, this quickly ceases to be typical when group after group of staff-accompanied students descends upon it, year after year, for

practice in 'community work'. Then, inevitably, much of the real value of the training is lost. This difficulty faces even the small centre which has only a few students and several neighbouring communities available for practice work.

The third major difficulty may well be with the students themselves. Most of them will be young, and therefore without adult experience of community life, and it will rarely be safe to assume that they are really keen and interested in the work of a community school. They will have formed their ideas about the teacher's job from what they have observed as pupils, and most of them will probably have been educated in schools of the formal type. They need orientating to the work of the teacher in the community school as well as training for it.

In view of these practical difficulties, what aims, then, can the training centres realistically set before themselves, and how can they achieve them? If they are severely practical they will concentrate on the job they can do best, and if necessary at the expense of jobs they cannot do so well. And the best job they can do, surely, is to stimulate the students to think out clearly *for themselves* what needs there are for school and community education; what they think they as teachers can reasonably do to meet them by work inside the school and outside in the community; and, lastly, how they can best prepare themselves through training at the centre to acquire the insights and the skills they feel they need.

This cannot be done by lectures. It means working very slowly. It means making the students feel really free to say what they think, raise difficulties, discuss different points of view, and reach their own conclusions

about them. It also means delaying decisions about practical work until the students have formulated their aims and gained some insight into the kind of problems they will have to face. Since time is limited, it also means less time for practice work in neighbouring communities. However, as we have just seen, this may not be such a great loss after all.

So much for orientation. It is admittedly slow and difficult and its results uncertain, but if it is attempted patiently and honestly, its results will be more lasting and more productive of real keenness and initiative than those obtained by more arbitrary methods. Moreover, it helps the students to understand what they want training for, and this is the best guarantee that they will really benefit from it.

Discussion can also play an important part in training. For instance, it can help to correct the common fault among teachers (and other community workers) of being so preoccupied with what they want to do that they neglect to think enough about the people they want to do it for. This is a frequent cause of failure in adult community work. The teacher cannot control the people in his parents' association, neighbourhood group, or adult literary class as he can the children in his school. They can do as they like, and to work with them successfully he must learn to work with them and avoid attempting to impose his aims upon them. Above all, he must be able to understand their point of view.

One way of helping students to do this is to give them practice in thinking as rural people rather than as teachers. This can be done by giving examples of unsuccessful community work and forming the students into small groups to find out in discussion the reasons why they failed.

It is surprising how many sound ideas and suggestions come to light in discussions of this kind; and yet, after all, should it be surprising? Every student will have his own personal experience of growing up in a community to draw on when he tries to think himself into the minds of ordinary people. Thus when a group of teachers-in-training, who were quite untrained in community work, were asked to find out in discussion possible reasons why peasant farmers in New Mexico had rejected an 'improved', heavier-yielding type of hybrid maize, they were able quite quickly to produce a long list of possible reasons, all of them sound, including not only the actual reason in New Mexico, but also half a dozen others which unknown to them had been responsible for similar failures in other parts of the world.* Of course, the students were delighted with their success, but the real value of the discussion was that it made them realize how easy it is in community work to overlook factors vital to success, and that the vital factors are those which matter to the people.

Other aspects of the work of the community school teacher can usefully be discussed in the same way to bring out many of the reasons why community service projects, home projects, Parent-Teacher Associations and other activities of the teacher so often fail. In each case, the training procedure is the same: to ask the students

* The specific reason in the case under discussion was that the people did not like the *taste* of the new maize, and that maize was their staple food. Among the other reasons suggested by the group were: (i) perhaps it took people longer to grow and prevented them from double-cropping their land; (ii) perhaps it had a shorter and thinner stalk which made it less useful for thatching, fencing, or fuel; (iii) perhaps the women found the grains too hard to grind; (iv) perhaps the agency supplying the new seed imposed unpopular conditions on the peasants. Extension schemes have in fact failed for each of these four reasons. For Indian examples see D. G. Mandelbaum, 'Planning and Social Change in India', *Human Organization*, XII, 3, pp. 4-12.

to discuss one specific instance of failure and to suggest the reasons why it failed.

Experience of group discussion can also help the student to learn how to work with groups. This is a skill essential to the community schoolteacher in almost every aspect of his work, whether he is using group activity methods in the classroom, stimulating his pupils to undertake group projects, organizing a school council, society or club, or working with an adult group. Such work in every case involves discussion: and the more the teacher can learn about discussion techniques the better his chances of success will be. It is here that experience in discussion groups during training can stand him in good stead. From this experience and with the help of the training staff he can learn a good deal about the difficulties he is likely to meet and the ways of dealing with them. This is an important and often neglected part of the teacher's training.

A good deal of the students' basic training for community school work can therefore be done inside the centre, and the more thoroughly it is done *before* they try their hand in a community outside the centre the better it is likely to be for everyone concerned. When the time does come, it is better to send the students out individually or in twos and threes rather than in large groups, and to good community schools rather than to the community nearest to the centre. Unfortunately for the centres, however, many areas contain very few good community schools, and this brings us face to face with our other major problem.

2. *In-service Training*

The success of any community school movement depends far more on the teachers already in the schools

than on the training of new teachers. To rely only on preliminary training must mean that for many years only a minority of the teachers will have been trained for work in community schools, and that even their training will be largely ineffective for lack of suitable schools to practise in while training, or to work in after training. And if the existing teachers are hostile to the new ideas, it will be hard for the newly-trained teachers to put them into practice, even if we can assume they want to.

Effective in-service training is therefore important, but it is also hard to provide. Unlike preliminary training, it is concerned with men and women who may be already set in their ways and neither want further training nor see any need for it. Thus in the early days of the Iloilo community school programme in the Philippines, in-service training was 'a test of real educational leadership, for the task was not simply a matter of stimulating to action the latent minds among teachers and supervisors. It had to cope with the negative and indifferent attitude of a number of the force. The sceptical and doubting members who did not see the need for breaking away from the old order had to be shown the way and be impressed by the wisdom of the new educational approach. The Community school idea could not be sold to the people unless it was built upon a foundation of faith, enthusiasm, and solid support of the teachers, principals, supervisors, and other adult education workers. . . .'¹⁹

There is also the difficulty that the teachers are already teaching and that training has to be arranged so as not to disrupt the work of the schools. This usually means that very little time can be spared for it. If teachers are taken off their jobs, it can only be for a

short time, and that is often found insufficient. Thus in India the Assessment Committee on Basic Education finds that the retraining courses for the existing teachers do not always give good results. 'But there is no escape from it. The vast majority of teachers for some time to come will be the older teachers with only short retraining in Basic education. This is one reason why many Basic schools are now, as referred to later in the report, of poor quality. We have to find such remedies as may be possible under existing circumstances to improve what is really an unsatisfactory situation.'²⁰ Later in its Report the Committee recommends that the minimum retraining period should be extended to five months at least. 'Any shorter course of training', it feels, 'will be very inadequate.'²¹

Other countries besides India have experimented with short courses, and in some cases with more success. In Brazil, the National Fundamental Education Campaign (*CNER*) training centres provide specially designed short courses for rural schoolmistresses who, though untrained, are generally 'willing and devoted workers'. 'There, for three or four months, they attend intensive courses in educational methods, hygiene, health education, gardening, poultry-raising, domestic science, domestic industries, arts and crafts, and recreational activities; they also acquire a certain practical knowledge of social service work. Practical instruction is given in the rural schools and in communities near the centres.' Each course is attended by thirty teachers, and by 1956 the *CNER* centres had already trained nearly a thousand of them.

Helped by the rural missions on their return to their schools, some of these women teachers are said to have achieved remarkable results. 'In the state of Rio

Grande do Sul, for instance, teachers cut off from all contact with civilization have managed to enliven the somewhat dull existence of the villagers by founding girls', mothers', farmers', and children's clubs, by organizing community festivities, and so forth.'²²

Courses of continuous in-service training which last for three or even five months tend to cause staffing difficulties in the schools. This is why some educational authorities prefer shorter courses, such as summer schools and workshops, which can be fitted into the school holidays. These do not interfere with staffing arrangements, and although each course is shorter and therefore covers less ground, this difficulty may be overcome if the teachers attend a planned *series* of courses over a period of several years.

This was the pattern adopted by the Director of Education of the United States Indian Service when he started to relate the teaching of the Amerindian schools to the people's local community life, and to develop each school 'to serve as a community centre in meeting the social and economic needs of the community'. His best hope of success, he believed, was to get the teachers started on a process of discussion, planning, and joint action which would 'substitute the creative ingenuity and integrated intelligence of many for the limited imagination and organizing ability of a few people'. He therefore organized a series of regional summer schools 'to present a common philosophy of education, demonstrate this philosophy in action, and supply to teachers the techniques and materials to carry it into their own classrooms and communities. . . . Demonstration classes, opportunities for practice teaching and chances to learn Indian handicrafts by actual participation were a part of each programme.'

This was only the first step. The regional summer schools were followed by short curriculum-planning conferences at which the teachers of each locality were able to work out more specific plans for their own local areas, and by staff meetings in the individual schools to study and discuss their own local community problems.²³

The Scide organization in Bolivia also arranges workshops (summer schools) on a regional and local basis. Ninety-seven central schoolteachers, technicians and directors of *nucleos* attended the four-week regional workshop organized in 1954, and nearly 200 teachers the four two-week local workshops held at *nucleo* central schools. The main purpose of these workshops was to give the teachers the knowledge and skill they needed for work in the community schools.²⁴

Many short, residential in-service training courses have also been held in the Philippines, but there a good deal of in-service training is also done at non-residential courses which the teachers can attend weekly during term-time on days when the schools are closed. Thus the first in-service training course for local teachers arranged by the Philippine Community School Training Centre at Bayambang ran for eighteen weeks, the teachers attending for three hours every Saturday. This workshop was intended to orientate teachers to community school work and to give them a working knowledge of its principles and practice. For this purpose the teachers were divided into groups to study and investigate the various aspects of community education, and to prepare reports for discussion at plenary sessions. As a result of this workshop it is claimed that the teachers learnt a good deal about community school practices, and also about how to work in groups. This

first workshop was followed by shorter courses to deal with particular problems of curricular development.²⁵

Apart from the specially organized courses so far discussed, some countries also organize regular in-service training by arranging for the teachers in each locality to meet for a few hours every month to exchange ideas, analyse problems, and discuss results. This has been done, for example, in Costa Rica.²⁶ It is also a major recommendation of the Indian Assessment Committee on Basic Education. This Committee distinguishes between *retraining*, which is attempted during an intensive training period lasting several months, and the kind of in-service training which is the result of such regular monthly meetings. 'All trained Basic school-teachers', it states, 'should come back to their Basic Training schools or to other suitable centres for one day every month and should sit with the staff of the Training school and the local Basic trained Inspecting Officer. Every problem concerning the Basic schools must be discussed at these meetings; the work of every month reviewed and the work for the next month drawn up and clearly explained.'²⁷

When I was discussing preliminary training earlier in this chapter, I suggested that it is very important to get the students to think out in discussion among themselves what needs there are for community education, what teachers can reasonably be expected to do about them, and what kind of training they need to enable them to do it. While this process may often be slow and its results uncertain, it may nevertheless be the best way of stimulating real interest and achieving lasting results. I suggested, too, that really free discussion also has an important part to play in training. It

can help the students to realize more clearly the need to understand the people's point of view, and it can provide them with first-hand experience of the kind of difficulties they are likely to meet in working with adult groups.

It is even more important to use this approach with existing teachers, for they are quite likely to resent attempts to change the old order, especially if they are compelled to attend orientation and training courses in their own free time, and feel that these have been arranged solely to burden them with new and quite unwelcome tasks. The teachers will then take the courses only because they must, and both during and after training they will co-operate as little as they can.

The only satisfactory solution to this problem is for the administrators to work out the new policy with the teachers it will affect. The resulting policy may then be more modest than was originally intended, and it may take much longer to work the details out, but it will also be much more likely to succeed just because most of the teachers will now support it.

Admittedly, it may be difficult for administrators to consult with teachers in this way, especially as many teachers may be unwilling to say what they really think for fear of harming their chances of promotion. But a good deal can be achieved in discussions organized by really sympathetic local supervisors, and still more by enlisting the help of the teachers' own associations if such associations exist. Teachers can speak their minds freely at meetings they have organized for themselves, and much more freely than at conferences or courses arranged by their own superior officers, however outwardly 'permissive' or 'democratic' they may seem to be.

Administrators who are used to a highly centralized school system may feel uneasy at the thought of consulting their teachers while policy is being formed, and they may rightly anticipate many difficulties. But the facts are that many teachers are genuinely critical of certain aspects of community school policies. The policy adopted in some countries lays heavy burdens on the teachers, and it does need enthusiastic teachers to carry it out. Yet enthusiasm cannot be imposed. It has to be kindled. One way, and perhaps the only way, of kindling the enthusiasm of the teachers for this kind of work is to get them to think out the need for it themselves. After all, attempts to *impose* the idea on teachers have not been noticeably successful.

It is probable, of course, that if the teachers felt really free to speak their minds about community school policy, they might question some of its assumptions. They might suggest, for instance, that the teacher can only do so much, that his work with the community's adults may conflict with his duty to his children, and that too great an emphasis on practical and project work will inevitably lead to a lowering of the standard reached in the traditional basic subjects of the school curriculum. These problems will be further discussed in the next chapter, but it is worth noting here that no community school policy which ignores them, or fails to find satisfactory solutions to them is likely in the long run to be successful.

It will help us to see these problems in better perspective if we recognize that the school is usually only one of several agencies concerned with community education. So far, we have been looking at the work of teachers as though only they had any responsibility for community education, and indeed that is the

impression one gets from reading most of the literature on community schools, including most of what has been written on training. To get a truer picture one has to turn to literature which mentions community schools without being specifically concerned with them. It is then that we realize that the school is, after all, only one of several agencies concerned with community education, and often criticized for working too much on its own. Thus the community schools in the Philippines, we are told, 'attempted to carry out programmes in agriculture, health, public works, and cottage industries independent of the government agencies directly responsible for these activities. Another public administration difficulty was that each agency attempted to sponsor a separate *barrio* organization for its separate programme. The Bureau of Agricultural Extension sponsored Farmers' Clubs and 4-H Clubs at the *barrio* level, the Home Demonstrators sponsored Rural Improvement Clubs, the schools sponsored P.T.A.s and *puroks*. The Department of Health sponsored Health Centres. Not only did each agency sponsor a separate organization, each also insisted on separate buildings for their societies in the same *barrios*.'²⁸ The Philippine Government has only recently tried to rectify this situation by establishing a central government office to bring about a co-ordinated approach to community development.

The fact that the school is only one of several agencies working in the field of community education can have important implications for training policy. In particular, it suggests a need for joint training schemes, and especially joint in-service training schemes for teachers and rural development workers of different kinds. Some countries, such as Brazil,²⁹ Mexico,³⁰ and Kenya,³¹

have already experimented with schemes of this kind, variously bringing together teachers, social workers, and agricultural, veterinary, and health instructors.

The joint training scheme is one possible approach to co-ordinating rural development work. Another is for the community development department, if such a department exists, to take the initiative in getting the staffs of other departments to support a general rural development programme. One such attempt was recently made by the Bhanjanagar Community Project staff in India. It took the form of two camps, each for fifty middle-aged and rather reactionary village teachers. These teachers had shown themselves jealous of the Community Projects Administration's village-level workers and they had been hindering them in their work. This was why the camps had been arranged. The teachers could not be forced to attend. They had to be persuaded to come for ten days in the holidays.

The idea of the camps was to win the teachers over from their hostile attitude by convincing them that their help was really valued and by showing them what they could do. The teachers were told about the new policy of the Indian Government and how much it had to rely on the people being willing to make an effort to help themselves; they were told about the work of the Community Projects Administration and encouraged to discuss it freely; they were taken on visits to progressive villages; and they were given practical demonstrations of the work involved in the agricultural, adult literacy, and recreational programmes.

In all this the emphasis was on what the teacher could do to help 'without detriment to his normal teaching assignments'. The teachers' reactions were carefully noted day by day, and an encouraging change



VII. TRAINING STUDENT-TEACHERS FOR PRACTICAL WORK

Trainees learn basket-making in Kenya.



VIII. BOLIVIAN TEACHERS LEARN NEW SKILLS

Above: Learning how to use a sprayer.

Below: A teacher learning a traditional craft from a local craftsman.

took place. At the beginning the teachers 'were all of extremely hostile minds, bent upon resisting every approach and refusing to accept anything that is being done. No constructive suggestions were forthcoming. The notes of the third day showed a perceptible "toning down", and there was a trickle of good and helpful suggestions. . . . On the sixth day, the campers chose to cut out fifteen minutes from the lunch break and continue a talk. . . . The peak was on the ninth day of the camp. Every one of the campers prayed for an extension of the camp period as ten days appeared just too little for so much.' Their feelings were summed up by the teacher who at first had been the most hostile of them all. 'They do not know how very useful we can all be if we choose to be,' he said. 'Let us snatch from others the whip hand in the national reconstruction drive and show them. That will put them to shame, for they have kept us so neglected.'³²

Several reasons contributed to the success of these camps. The Community Projects Administration had no power to force the teachers to co-operate. It could only ask them to help. This was flattering to the teachers and made them feel important. Also they were free, *and felt free*, to grumble and criticize and air their complaints. Under these circumstances they found it hard to maintain their feelings of resentment and soon began to feel more willing to help, if only to prove to themselves that they really were worthy of the consideration now given to them. They were then ready to be shown what they could do, and they were not asked to do too much. Nor were they given any cause for relapsing back into their former attitude after they had left the camp. They found that the C.P.A. workers now kept in close contact with them, sought them out for advice and help,

and gave them full credit with the villagers for the help they gave.

Although this last example illustrates an interesting approach to the training of teachers as auxiliary helpers in community work, it has little enough to do with their work in the school. It may lead us to question just how much the teacher can really be expected to do to foster education for local community life, and whether this, in fact, should be regarded as his primary function. To find answers to these questions we need to assess a number of factors. These will be briefly discussed in the next and final chapter.

X

ASSESSING THE COMMUNITY SCHOOL

IN this book I have examined the need for local community education and described some of the many attempts to meet it through the schools. Most of these attempts have had some measure of success, but even their most enthusiastic supporters cannot yet feel that the community school idea has really caught on, except in a few rather isolated and relatively backward areas.

The reason is not so much that people question the need for community education, but rather the choice of the school as the main agency for providing it. This is partly because many educational administrators, teachers, and others believe that the proposed new purposes for the school will adversely affect its existing work, and partly because they doubt whether the

school can effectively undertake them. In short, they have still to be convinced that the community school idea is practicable, and really in the interests of the children (and adults) of the local community.

Every educational institution is up against the problem of time. There is always so much that could usefully be done, and so little time to do it, that the problem is not just one of selecting what can usefully be taught, but of selecting what is *most* useful. So many factors can affect judgements of this kind that differences in viewpoint are only to be expected. What is most needed, where major changes of educational policy are concerned, is that people should try to see the problem whole, noting disadvantages as well as advantages, in order to assess where the balance of advantage lies.

If we think about the community school in this way, what then are its possible disadvantages? One, presumably, is that it may give too much attention to education for local community life and too little to other educational needs, such as preparation for life in the national community. And while it may be argued that only a minority of the children are likely to leave their local community when they have grown up, it should not therefore be assumed that this minority is unimportant, or that the remaining majority do not need something more than purely local education. Almost everywhere in the tropics the effect of development programmes is to bring the people of each local community more and more closely into touch with other people, and it is at least arguable that it is as important for the school to foster community feeling at the national as at the local community level. Thus in the Philippines: 'Apprehension has been expressed that too much emphasis on local materials without a

counter-balance of the national and international elements for integrating the various elements of society may result in a narrow outlook. It is therefore essential that in the construction of the curriculum for the community school, a proper balance be observed so as to satisfy the needs of the learner, not only for easy adjustment to his community, but also for his intelligent participation in national and international affairs.¹

Many community schools also lay great stress on group project work and on school councils, societies, and clubs, as a practical means of orientating and preparing children for future participation in adult community life. Here, again, some people feel that the schools may sometimes allot so much time to group activities that the individual children get too little encouragement to think and act freely for themselves.

Another disadvantage is that practical work in agriculture and schemes for home and community projects often take up so much of the children's time that too little is left for the proper teaching of the fundamentals of education, by which is commonly meant a thorough grounding in reading, writing, and arithmetic. Most people feel that this should be a major purpose of the school, and they oppose the idea of the community school because they believe that 'the time and effort devoted by the school to improvement of the community brings about a corresponding deterioration in the education of the child, particularly in the fundamentals of education, and therefore jeopardizes the welfare of the schoolchildren.'² It is probably this belief, more than anything else, which has been responsible for the slow growth of the community school movement. Nor is it based merely on prejudice. In a

very frank address to school and training college supervisors in the Philippines in 1956, the Director of Public Schools himself called attention to the fact that 'in our effort to implement the community education programme on the basis of the way in which we have interpreted it, we have wittingly or unwittingly done violence to accepted educational values and standards'.³ He did not therefore condemn the idea of community schools, but he did suggest that the existing practice in the Philippines needed reform.

The criticisms I have outlined above are mainly levelled at policies which carry community school ideas to excess. Most people would agree that children do need some kind of education for community life and that the school should provide it. Yet it is by no means certain that the school can always provide it with any real effect. Children learn most easily from example and experience, and when the example of the school and the community conflict then that of the community is most likely to prevail. After all, the home environment of parents, relations, and playmates is always dominant before the child goes to school. Even when he is attending school, unless he goes to a boarding school, he is there only for a few hours a day. This means that the school is not necessarily the main influence on the child even during school life, and when he leaves he is finished with it. Thereafter, his environmental influences are those of the adult community.

Thus it cannot be taken for granted that the school will really succeed in educating children for community life, however hard the teachers try, unless the adults can be educated too. But who is to educate them? Only too often the answer is the teacher. He is expected to educate them *indirectly* through the children by means

of home projects, or *directly* by forming adult classes, by organizing parent-teacher associations, or by work with neighbourhood groups.

I am not suggesting that the teacher cannot, or should not, do work of this kind and, indeed, close contact with adults is essential to teachers in any community school. What I am questioning is the assumption which is all too commonly made that he can succeed in doing it alone without a much more liberal staffing policy in the schools and a great deal of active support from other rural development workers. Indeed, there is good reason to doubt whether the teacher should ever be made *mainly* responsible for the community education of adults except, perhaps, in the most educationally backward areas. The main job in community education in most tropical areas is with adults, but the main job of the teacher is with the children in the school. If the teacher has to do both jobs, he is unlikely to do either of them well, for the needs of the one will tend to conflict with the needs of the other. It has to be recognized that community education, embracing as it does so many varied aspects of adult life, is best achieved by co-operation between all the agencies concerned with local development rather than by the isolated efforts of any single one. The school is one of these agencies, and the schoolteacher can contribute far more effectively, in school and out, with children and with adults, if he is regarded as one of a team of community education workers, each with his own job and his own specialist interest, each helping the others and in turn being helped by them.

Thus there are three major points to be borne in mind when considering what the aims and functions of community schools should be. The first point is "that

the teacher cannot effectively educate the children for community life if his purposes and those of the community conflict; and that the successful education of the children therefore depends on someone succeeding in educating their parents, together with the rest of the adult community. The second is that the teacher cannot effectively educate *either* children *or* adults if he is held primarily responsible for educating both. The third is that although he should be relieved of the major responsibility for educating adults, he can nevertheless give other community education workers very useful help.

These conclusions provide a sound and practicable basis for working out a community school policy which neither sacrifices the educational interests of the children, arouses the antagonism of their parents, nor hopelessly overloads the teacher. When the teacher is freed from all primary responsibility for the community education of adults he is free to think of the children first, and to choose the curriculum and the teaching methods which meet their needs best. He will not then be so greatly preoccupied with the immediate responsibility of exerting influence on the adult community that he will be forced to neglect 'the fundamentals' in his teaching of the children, and in whatever he does to relate the teaching of the school to local community life, again he will be able to put the interests of the children first. Thus if he uses home or community projects, he will do so because he believes that he can make them educationally worthwhile for the children, and he will plan them accordingly, although he will naturally hope that they will help to educate the adults too.

He will, of course, have many direct contacts with the community's adults, and more especially with the parents of the children, but here again his *main* purpose

will be to enlist support for the work he does with the children. He will value a Parent-Teacher Association, for instance, for the chances it gives him of reaching agreement with the parents about the aims of the school. Always, in whatever he does, he is free to make the children his *main* job.

Nevertheless, much of the work the teacher does for the children may indirectly help to educate the adults too, and all the more effectively, it may be thought, because he is now able to satisfy their expectations from the school, so that they can see him working with them rather than against them. In addition, and without any detriment to his responsibilities to the children, he can do much to help the agencies which work among the adults. Unlike the workers of these agencies, he usually lives in the one community in which he works. The adults are his neighbours. He can really get to know them, make friends with them, and join their clubs and societies. He can get to know local problems better than workers who come in occasionally from outside. If he is generally helpful and unassuming, and does a good job of work at the school, he may soon acquire real influence with many of the people.

As the teacher thus acquires local knowledge and influence, he can give a great deal of valuable help to visiting departmental workers. He can supply them with information about local people and local problems; he can help to create a favourable local climate of opinion; and when they are gone he can do a good deal to help consolidate their work. In fact, he can become a key local helper in almost every kind of adult community work, although he takes the main responsibility for none. In return, the departmental workers can help the teacher. They can give technical help and advice on

school gardening and similar activities, help to develop young farmers' or stockbreeders' clubs, judge competitions, and give talks and demonstrations at the school.

It must be admitted that this desirable, two-way co-operative relationship between the community schoolteacher and other community workers has rarely been achieved. This is at least partly due to the fact that their respective functions are usually not clearly enough defined. In some way or another they are all concerned with community education. It is only too easy for them to enter into rivalry and competition with one another where their functions seem to overlap, and thus hinder rather than help each other.

Fortunately, there are now encouraging signs that this is being realized, at least in some countries. In the Philippines, says T. Krishnamurthy: 'The inauguration of the President's Committee on Community Development marks a new era in the area of rural improvement in this country.'⁴ The new policy aims at redefining the responsibilities of all the agencies concerned with community development in order to avoid conflict and overlapping between them. It limits the main responsibilities of the teacher to his school, and it creates a new department with its own staff of *barrio*-level workers to take the prime responsibility for adult community work, and to co-ordinate the work of all the other departments. It is interesting to note that while 'Agriculturists and Educators at the Bureau and Provincial levels still feel threatened that the *barrio*-level worker will infringe on the technical prerogatives of the agricultural extension agent and the *barrio* schoolteacher . . . less misunderstanding is reported and observed at the *barrio*-level. The *barrio* schoolteacher

and the agricultural extension agents have always been overworked so that in general they may welcome the assistance of the *barrio* community development worker if he does not assume such an authoritarian role as to threaten their status and aspirations, a role that is de-emphasized in the community development worker human relations training.⁵

If experience has taught the community school-teacher in the Philippines to welcome a more restricted field of work, there are also signs, in India, that village-level workers are beginning to value the village teacher's help. It was noted in the last chapter that the Community Projects Administration staff at Bhanjanagar had organized two ten-day orientation camps for village teachers with the avowed purpose of winning their co-operation.⁶ This experiment has been followed by a much bigger scheme for one-month orientation training camps in many centres in each of fourteen States during 1957-8. 'The intention of the orientation training is to prepare the schoolteacher to be able to enthuse the people, particularly the youth, to play their role with understanding in the development of the village.'⁷ Schemes for the joint training of teachers and other community workers are presumably designed with much the same aim in mind.

In this last chapter I have discussed only those few general principles which I believe should underlie every community school policy. For the rest, the aims and functions of any community school must always be affected by so many purely local factors that it is quite unsafe to generalize. But one last comment should be made. This is that no teacher or educational administrator can establish a community school, except in name, merely by making decisions and using his

authority. A school becomes a community school, in fact as well as in name, only to the extent that people support it because they come to agree with what it is trying to do. This is the real test, for it is this more than anything else which will decide whether the school can exert a lasting influence on the community education of the children, and on the adults too.



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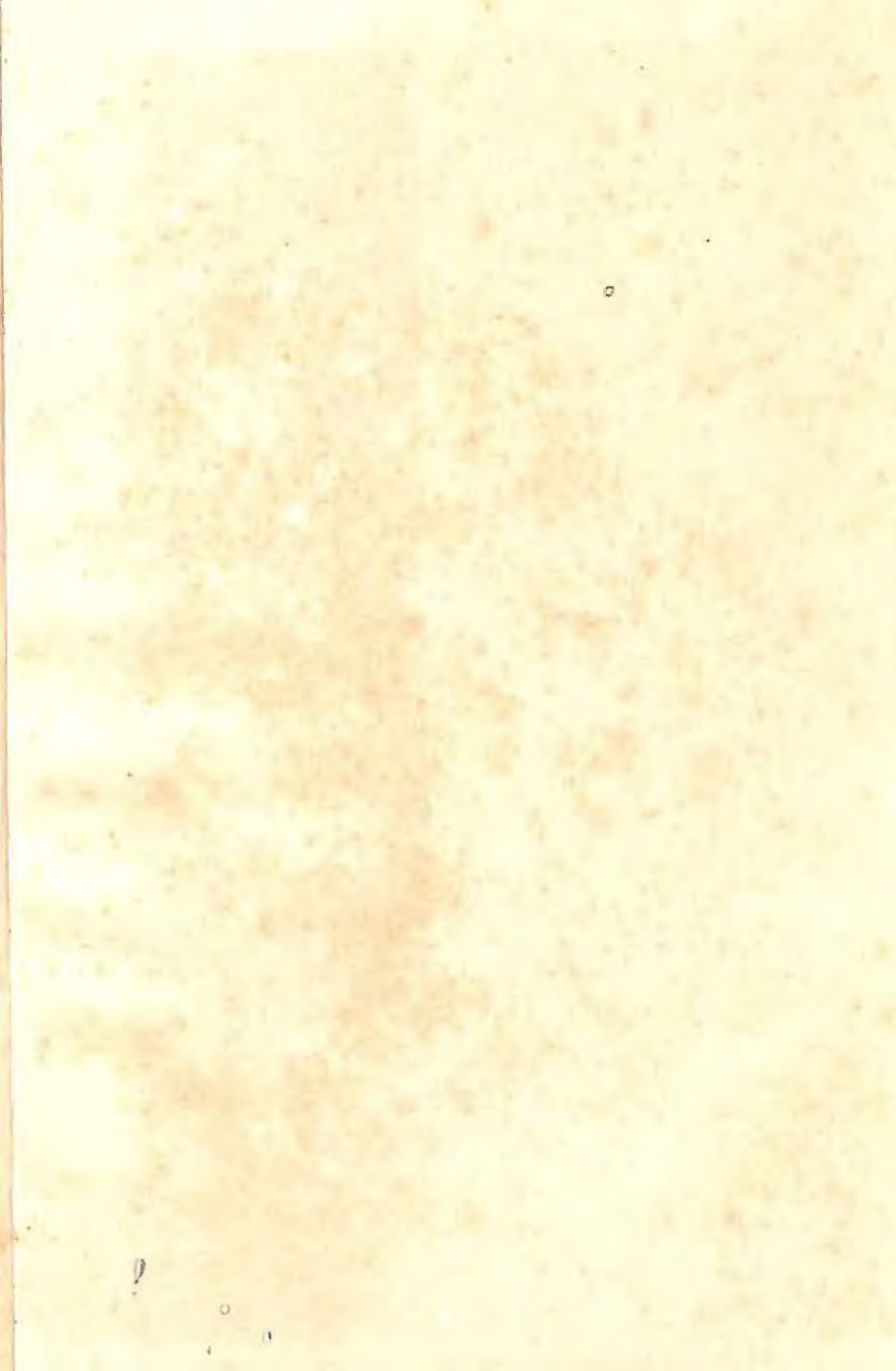
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